Unravelling Ancient Mysteries

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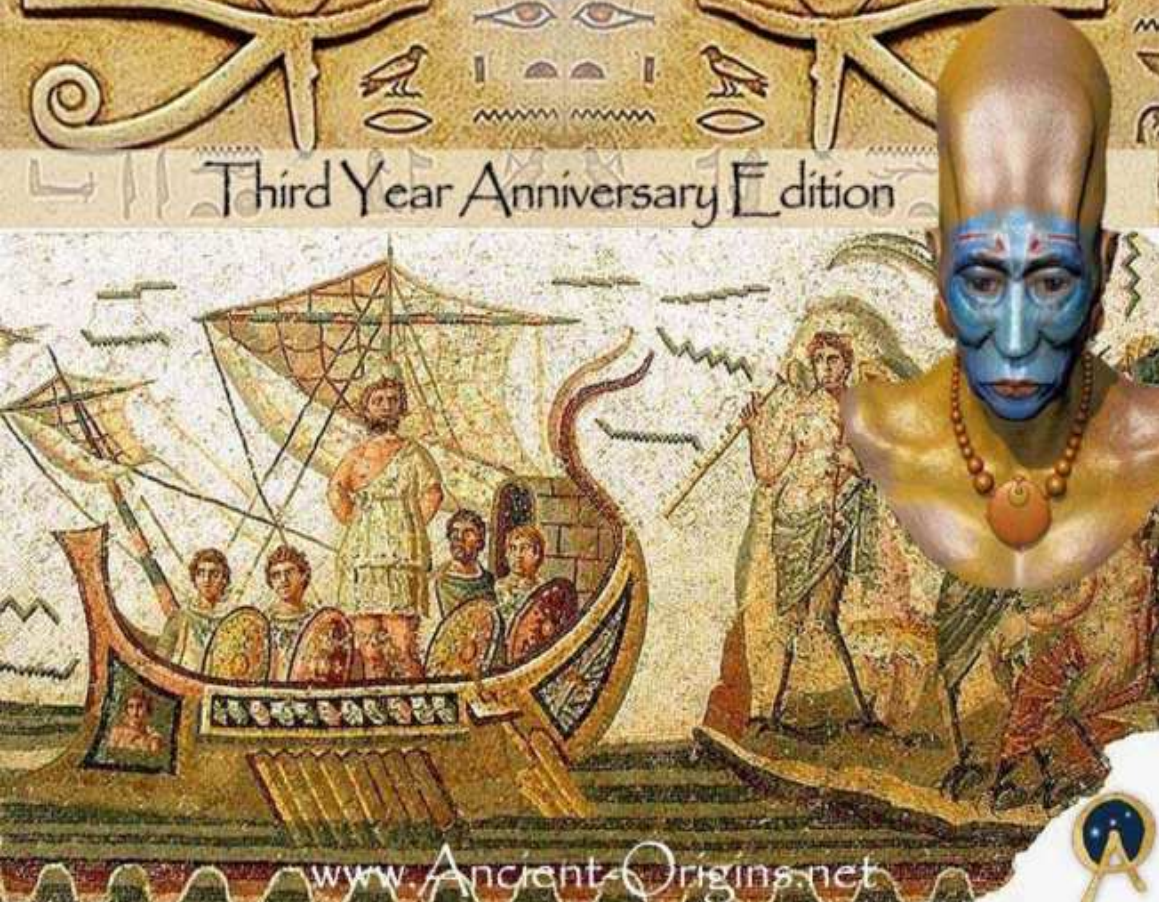

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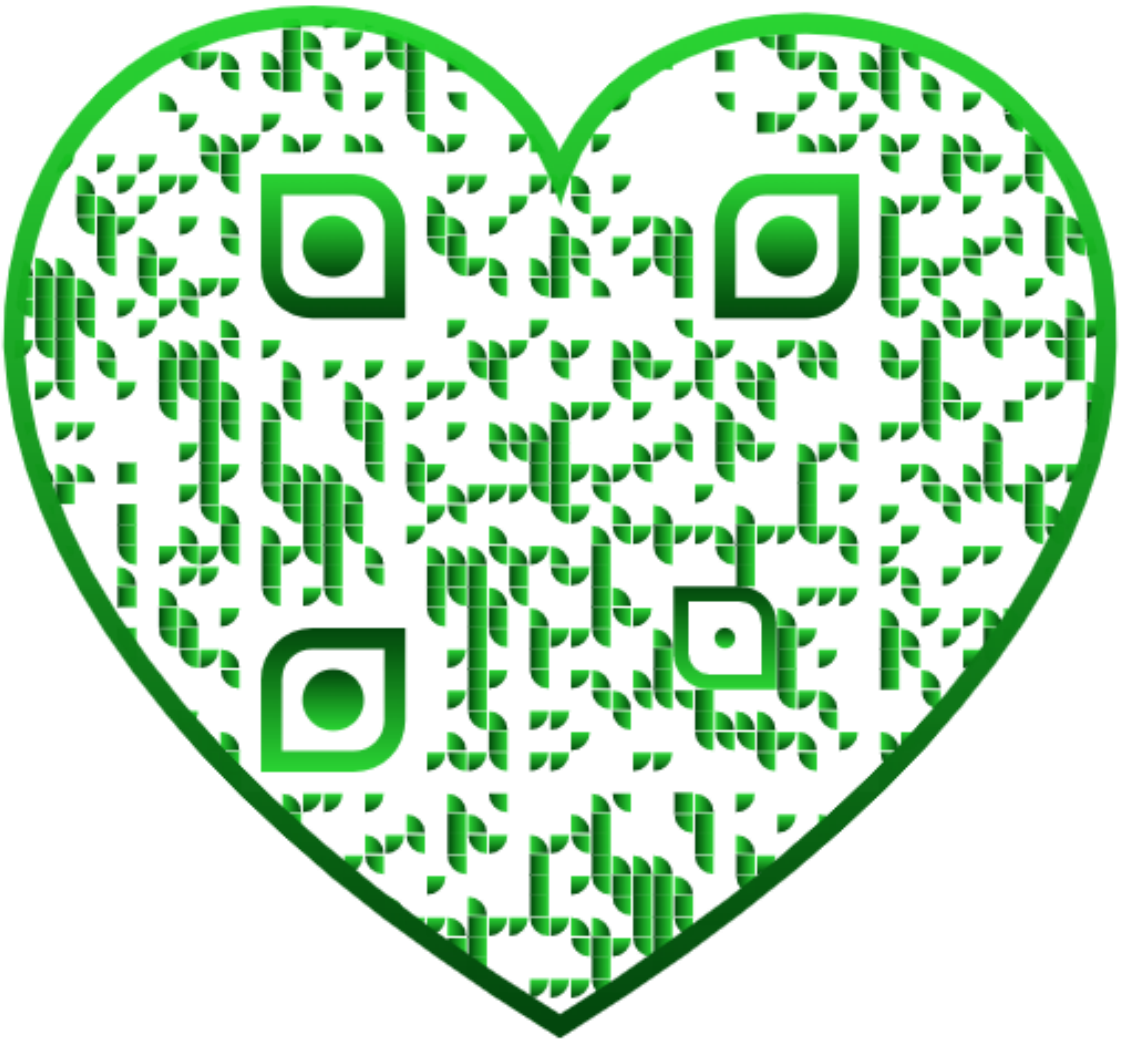

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God's Gate and the Sun Temple: La Puerta de Hayu Marca y Koricancha

By Ken Jeremiah

Peru has a rich and mysterious history. With extant indigenous groups such as the Uros, Quechua, Aymara, and the Jivaro, which are known for their head-shrinking techniques, and historical populations like the Wari and the Chancay, known for their amazing mask-making skills, Peru is an anthropologist's dream. Some of the ancient Peruvians were wiped out when the Inca invaded, and others moved out into Lake Titicaca, the world's highest navigable lake, never to return. The Inca built (or at least added to pre-existing) large, enigmatic structures, such as Machu Picchu, an amazing city perched on an 8,000-foot-high mountaintop; approximately five square miles in size, it housed a population of about 1,000 people who enjoyed running water and crops grown on site. Besides the nearly 140 houses at this mountain retreat, there were storage buildings, baths, and amazing temples. Machu Picchu is located just outside of Cusco, the *axis mundi* of the Inca.

Machu Picchu

Cusco, Peru

Outside of Cusco are other amazing sites, such as Tambomachay: a *huaca* (holy building) perched upon a sacred, natural spring, which the Inca likely used for ritual ablutions, and the Incan fortress of Sacsayhuaman. Built of enormous limestone, andesite, and diorite stone blocks, the largest is 361 tons, and it is unknown how they were able to transport such blocks from the quarry nearly five miles away to their present resting place. I had specifically traveled to see such sites, and when I arrived in Cusco, which has an altitude of nearly 12,000 feet, I came down with the worst case of altitude sickness I had ever had in my travels. To combat this, I chewed some coca leaves. A secondary effect of these leaves is that it curbs the appetite. Nevertheless, before retiring for the evening, I realized that I had not eaten in more than 12 hours, and decided to buy some skewered chicken from a street vendor. It turned out that it had not been cooked properly, so halfway through the night, food sickness made its arrival known.

Sacsayhuaman

Flashing fevers dispersed intermittingly by chills that shook my whole body did not change my plans, as I could not spare even a single day of rest. I had a schedule to keep. It was in this condition that I saw Sacsayhuaman. Climbing up a narrow, winding dirt road to get to the site was torturous, and heading out to the ruins of Machu Picchu the next day was even worse. With nothing but water in my system for more than a day and a half, things became better while I was still in Aguas Calientes, the town that surrounds the mountain ruins, and when I returned to Cusco the following afternoon, I was healthy again. It was then that I visited the amazing Temple of the Sun, Koricancha (also spelled Qoricancha), which means "golden courtyard" in Quechua. Initially called Inti Wasi, the Inca dedicated it to the sun god Inti, and as is the case with many temples dedicated to sun deities throughout the world, they adorned it with gold.

Koricancha, originally called Inta Wasi

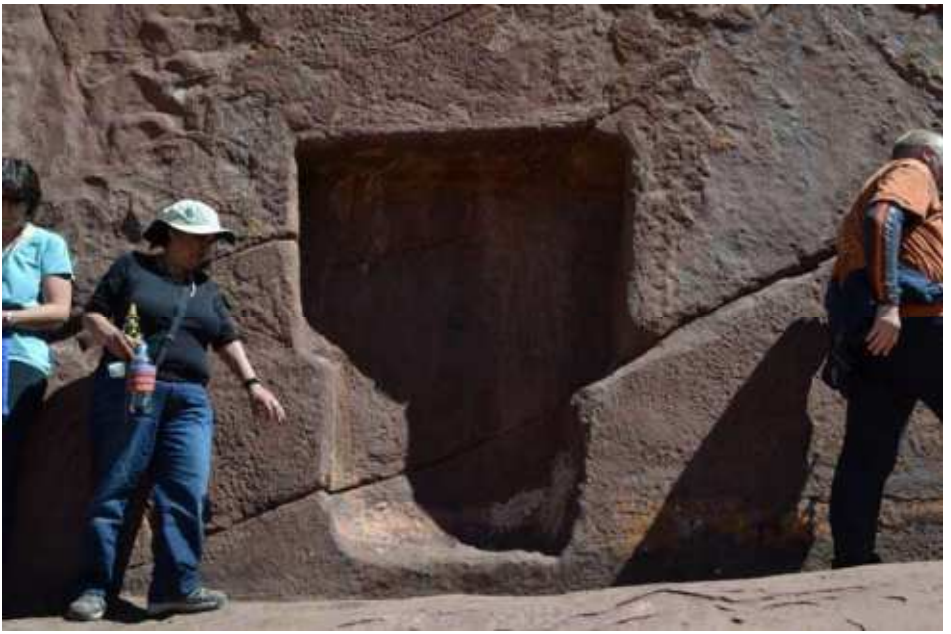
At the height of their power, this temple was one of the most important in the entire empire. The Inca used large stones, similar to those used in the construction of Machu Picchu and Sacsayhuaman, to create the walls. Then, they inserted golden plates, and decorated the temple with golden vases and statues. The mummified bodies of deceased Incan kings were also placed inside, and the Inca likewise honored them with royal clothing, headdresses, and golden ritual objects. These mummies, while certainly not alive, were not considered dead, and the Aclla Cuna (Virgins of the Sun) cared for them. Other important artifacts were in Koricancha. Life-sized golden statues of deities and deified ancestors were in the courtyard, and golden altars were the stage upon which the Aclla Cuna prepared ritual foods and offerings. Among all of the sacred artifacts, however, one in particular was revered: a sun disk made of pure gold.

According to legend, this disk was more than an ornamental or even ritual object. It was the key to a sacred doorway called La Puerta de Hayu Marca, or the Gate of the Gods. It is said that the first Incan priest-king Aramu Muru took this golden disk to the site of an ancient, spiritual city in which the inhabitants could commune with gods. Readers may find this idea strange, but even in modern times, legends from worldwide cultures relate that ancient, even antediluvian civilizations were in contact with gods. In the Christian tradition, God became angry and decided to kill all humans save Noah and his family and friends, and He tasks him with saving two of each species. The Sumerian, Akkadian, and more than 500 other traditions have similar accounts of a great flood and divine beings reaching out to assist a select group of sentient beings. Even in modern times, Mahayana Buddhists meditate upon Bodhisattvas, savior deities who supposedly assist humans. Catholic and Orthodox Christians likewise pray to saints,

deified human beings who are closer to divinity. While such saints are alive, they are similarly thought to have the ability to commune with God. Therefore, when Incan legends speak about an ancient city in which its inhabitants were closer to Inti, this is universal and unceasing nomenclature, and the tale should not be dismissed outright because of it.

Worldwide myths and legends generally spring from something, some fraction of truth that storytellers elaborate upon throughout the centuries. Good questions to keep in mind are, “What is the real truth?” and “What is the real history?”

According to the Incan legend, Aramu Muru headed out to this sacred city (that archaeologists have not discovered), which supposedly existed near Lake Titicaca. He approached a giant doorway cut into an artificially flattened mountainside. In the center of this stone indentation was a hollow into which he placed the sun disk. When he did so, the stone door shimmered and became bright. Aramu stepped through the portal and it thereafter returned to stone. He was never seen again, and the door never changed again. The solar disk was allegedly returned to Koricancha in Cusco, where the Spaniards later likely looted it along with the temple’s other golden objects. This legend would have likely been dismissed as an outright fairy tale if it were not for two facts: the native populations continue to pass along this story as a historical occurrence, and the described doorway actually exists near Lake Titicaca, approximately an hour’s drive from Puno, which some claim to be the country’s most dangerous city.



La Puerta de Hayu Marca: The Gate of the Gods

I decided to visit the Gate of the Gods. Since Puno is 12,500 feet high and I did not want a repeat of what occurred in Cusco, I decided to take an eight-hour bus ride rather than an extremely short flight. Upon arrival, I tried an alpaca steak, had a pisco sour, and then checked into the hotel. In the morning, I arranged for a driver who could translate from Quechua to Spanish to meet me the following day; I hired him to take me to the Gate of the Gods and obviously to help me to speak with the locals. I can communicate in Spanish without difficulty, but I don't know more than a word or two in Quechua. In the meantime, I headed out into Titicaca to visit the manmade Uros islands, and then continued on to Taquile, one of the larger islands in the huge lake. Although it was sunny, it was cold outside. Forgetting how much closer I was to the sun, I spent the entire day outside without thinking of using sunscreen, and when I returned to Puno later that

evening, I had the worst sunburn of my life. It was in this state that I headed out to see la Puerta de Hayu Marca in the morning.

We headed through Jayllihuaya and Chucuito toward Juli. After about an hour, the driver turned and said, “We are lost.”

Driving through a remote village, some locals were carrying supplies along the edge of a tree line. He stopped to ask for directions, and they responded. I asked what they had said. He replied, “I don’t know. They speak Aymara, not Quechua.” Then, he pulled out a large map, searched it with his finger, and then stated, “I think I know how to get there.”

La Puerta de Hayu Marca from a distance

He was successful, and within a half-hour, we arrived. I began taking pictures of the site from a distance, and as we approached, I realized there was a group of tourists visiting it. After speaking with some of them later, most of them were either from the United States or Australia. They followed an unusual procedure. An indigenous man was burning coca leaves in front of the doorway, an offering to the gods. Each visitor placed a few leaves into the burning bowl and then proceeded to stand in a tall recessed shaft to the left side of the portal. There they crossed their arms in a manner reminiscent of Egyptian sarcophagi. When it was their turn, they stood in front of the doorway with outstretched arms before kneeling down in front of it. They bowed, then stood up, continued walking to the next recessed shaft that flanked the door's right side, and copied the previous actions. My driver turned to me and asked, "What are these people doing?"

Visitors at God's Gate

He didn't speak English. I told him I would ask the visitors and then let him know. After questioning several people who followed this bizarre pattern, it became clear that no one knew why they were doing what they were doing. Several claimed that they could feel energy emanating from the rock, but when I put my hands on it later, I concluded that such visitors were (possibly) delusional. They didn't know much about its history, and one of them probably didn't even know what country she was in, since she told me that "the Mayan gods use the doorway." I considered explaining that this is an Incan, not Mayan site, and that there were no Mayans in Peru, but then decided she would be likely happier to remain ignorant and I let it go. When I conveyed my findings to my translator, he laughed aloud. Now it was his turn. We walked past the monument for quite some time until we came upon some native inhabitants (who could speak Quechua), and we asked them about the doorway.

It is 23 feet tall, and the small circular indentation in its center, where Aramu Muru allegedly placed the sun disk, is approximately six feet off the ground. No one knows who built it, when it was built, or its purpose, but Native American legends hold that the gods live in a different dimension, and this carving is a doorway to that realm. Supposedly, Incan heroes had passed through the gate and attained immortality. One woman commented that some of them had even come back for short periods to assist humans, after which they returned to the land of the gods. They claimed that the doorway was opened with a special disk, likely the same one that was once at Koricancha. However, they did not know much more than that.

Later that evening, I scoured the Internet for information about the site, and came across outlandish theories, including some that traced Aramu Muru (also called Amaru Meru) to the missing continent of Mu, claiming he was an enlightened ruler who joined the Americas together, hence the name Amaru-ca, Ameru-ca, Ameri-ca (Land of the Serpent). Other theories were even stranger. The truth is, there is no historical evidence that Aramu Muru even existed. The name only shows up in unsubstantiated tales. Also, there is no evidence that explains what the door was actually used for, but it is likely that the indigenous tales of a man placing a solar disk in the central indentation is real.

Early religions all over the world, including the Americas, were animistic. Spirits resided in natural objects. Gold, symbolic of the sun, was considered especially holy, and carving it into shapes that represented their deities more fully would have made them objects of veneration. La Puerta de Hayu Marca was likely carved specifically to hold such a golden, venerated object, so people from surrounding villages could visit it and make offerings. Shaman priests may have even stood in front of it and performed

ceremonies, just like Catholic priests stand in front of the cross or crucifix and hold mass. The cross is high, so the priest does not block it. The indentation which held the sun disk is also high (six feet) when considering the average height of the local indigenous population (five feet).

Gate of the Gods

In addition, a worn-down step in front of the monument, which today looks like a ramp, makes this even more likely. This most-likely usage of the stone carving has certainly been exaggerated and expanded upon throughout the centuries, and people used their imaginations to add fanciful and supernatural elements to a real historical phenomenon. Such tales have made this site one of the most famous in the world, and people from diverse countries continue to visit it, bringing money to the local populations, which definitely need it. No matter what, the Gate of the Gods is symbolic of the great unknown, and it causes people to consider

otherworldly possibilities. No matter how mysterious such tales may be, the real truth is embedded within, waiting to be extracted.

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References

Jeremiah, K. Eternal Remains. First Edition Designs, 2014

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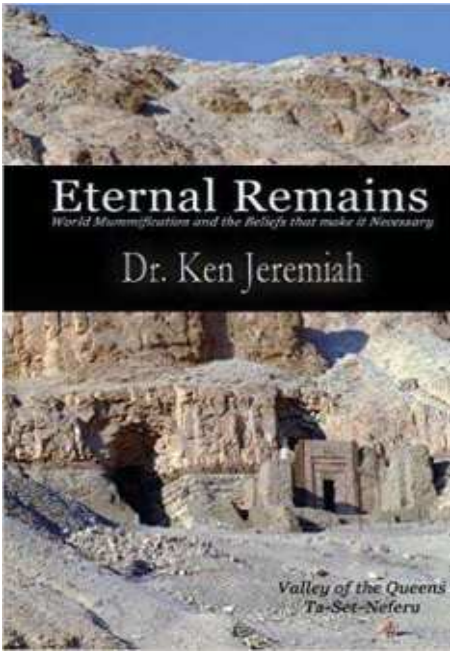
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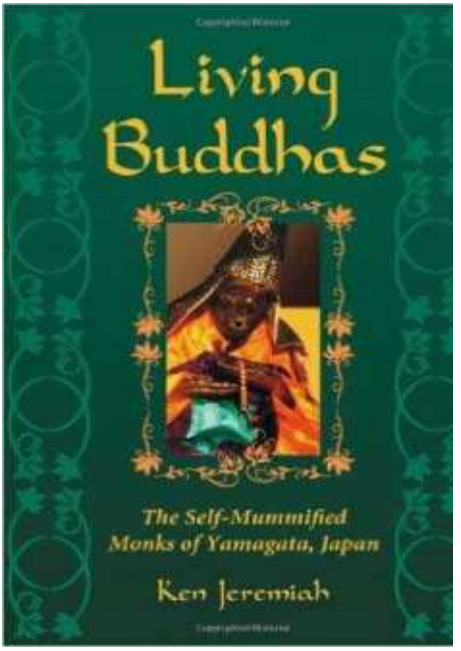

Living Buddhas
The Self-Mummified Monks of Yamagata, Japan
Ken Jeremiah

Were the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel Ever Lost?

By Cam Rea

When examining the mysteries of the eighth century BCE, all one has to do is look in the Bible or an ancient history book to realize that Assyria had no outside threats. The Hittites and Egyptians were a shell of their former glory and imposed no threat to the Assyrian borders. The once mighty United Kingdom of Israel, under the reign of King David, and later his son Solomon, divided into two separate kingdoms after Solomon's death. The great kings of Israel were too busy fighting amongst themselves. Syria, to the northwest of Assyria was not even a threat to Assyrian expansion either. As for Phoenicia, they were unstable on land and had no real standing army other than those they relied on to volunteer. The rest of the smaller tribal groups were mere principalities or city-states similar to Phoenicia. From the view that the ancient biblical historical texts 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles gives us, one could say the reason the Middle East was so easy to take was because it was so fragmented and thus no single nation surrounding Assyria—whether it be a city-state or a community of tribes—posed no real threat to Assyria.

Assyrian attack on a town with archers and a wheeled battering ram, 865–860 BC. (Public Domain)

So how did Assyria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel come to blows? And what happened to the ten tribes of ancient Israel that were said to be lost in time after being conquered by the Assyrian Empire?

In 738 BCE King Tiglath-pileser made his way west to collect tribute and to expand the ever growing Assyrian Empire. He began his regional tour starting with what was left of the fractured kingdoms of the former Hittite empire. Turning back south to Syria and then heading west to the city-states of Phoenicia, he subdued the citizens without a fight, collecting just about anything and everything the individual kingdoms could offer. This kept Assyria out of their lands by turning them into Assyria's vassals.

Tiglath-Pileser III: Detail from a stela from the walls of his palace. (Public Domain)

Next on the list for Assyria was the kingdom of Israel. Menahem was the king of Israel at the time when Tiglath-pileser III arrived at their border. For a long time before the Assyrian threat, the Hebrew prophets Hosea, Amos, and Joel foretold the coming destruction of Israel if they did not repent of their sins and come back to the god Yahweh:

And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted

the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

Illustration of King Menahem, of the northern Israelite Kingdom of Israel. (Public Domain)

The storm was on the horizon and it was time to pay financially, for King Menahem gave a thousand talents of silver to Tiglath-pileser by extracting 50 shekels from each wealthy man. An enormous 60,000 citizens of wealth gave up their money to the Assyrian coffers. After getting his tribute, Tiglath-pileser left the

outskirts of Israel, leaving the kingdom intact and still in the hands of Menahem. One can only speculate if this was a one-time tribute deal, or multiple times year after year. In either case, Menahem had just made his kingdom look impotent before the king of Assyria. Nevertheless, what could King Menahem have done? All one has to do is read II Kings 15:16, and realize that most of his people would not fight for him anyway.

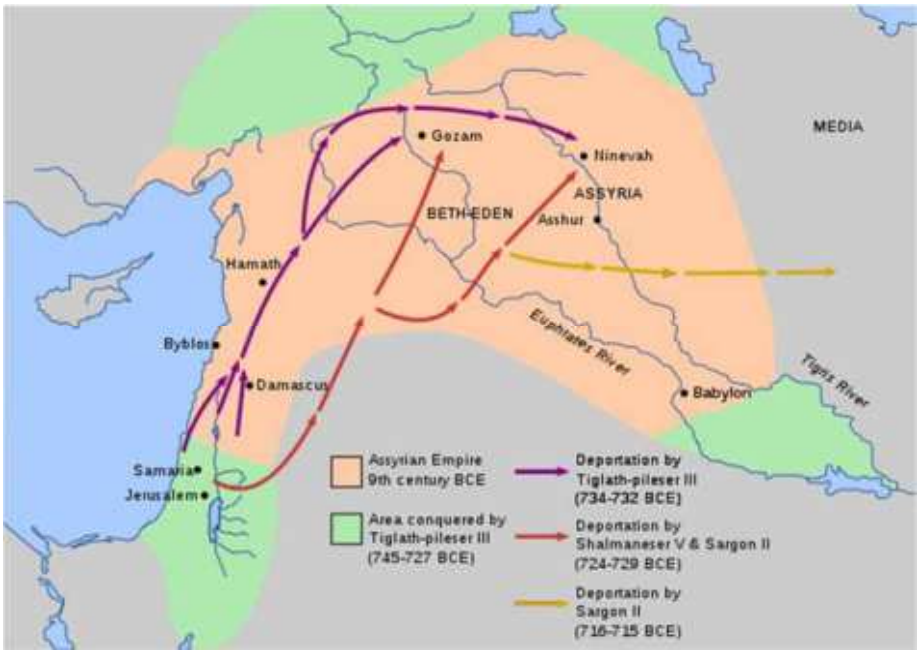
King Menahem remained on the throne six more years before he died. His son Pekahiah took the throne and reigned for only two years before he was murdered inside the palace by Pekah and 50 Gileadites in Samaria (II Kings 15:23-26). It seems Pekah murdered Pekahiah because Pekahiah continued to let Assyria dominate Israel. This made the people of Israel mad, and the result was a murdered king by a man of the military.

King Pekah made an alliance with King Rezin of Damascus. This indicated that Pekah was cutting the Assyrian yoke off Israel's neck. Pekah would also go to the Edomites and the Philistines for their support of a joint coalition or alliance to stop the Assyrian war machine from expanding farther west or south. This alliance was really an attempt to counter-balance the Assyrian power to the east, and once Assyria got word of what was going on, their king, Tiglath-pileser III, took action.

The First Captivity

When the Assyrians marched down the coast, it is most likely that the second wave of invasion was held back for some time before the force continued its march from the north, advancing inland as described in II Kings 15:29. This second wave of attack that Tiglath-pileser sent was the tip of the sword. While the coastal invasion was pushing South, one can speculate that parts of the army turned inland from the coast, pushing towards the east and

flanking the population therein, while the larger northern army began its descent south into the tribal lands of Dan and Naphtali and beyond.



Map showing Tiglath's conquests (green) and deportation of Israelites. Tiglath-Pileser III discouraged revolts against Assyrian rule with the use of forced deportations of thousands of people all over the empire. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Tiglath-pileser mentions conquering Naphtali, and his conquest of the coast in his inscription:

on the border of the Land of Omri [viz. Israel]...the wide land of Naphtali in its entirety, I brought within the border of Assyria. My official (tartan) I set over them as governor. Hanno of Gaza fled before my weapons.

This inscription shows two different events at the same time. Notice that Tiglath-pileser III mentions taking “Naphtali in its

entirety", and that he brought them into Assyria. Notice what he has to say at the end. "Hanno of Gaza fled before my weapons." This inscription may show that, at the same time as Tiglath-pileser's army had just completed the takeover of Naphtali, it may have also completed the final phase of conquering Gaza, which had been a Philistine city. This inscription seems to show us that before taking Naphtali, Tiglath-pileser's army had been conquering the coastal regions of the Levant until it reached the border of Egypt.

But Tiglath-Pileser mentions more in his annals and sometimes repeating himself but adding new information:

… x captives from the city of […]-bara; 625 captives from the city of […]

[… captives from the city of] Hannathon; 650 captives from the city of Qa[…

Captives from the city of Jo]bath; 656 captives from the city of Ir[……]

… people together with their possessions […] … the cities of Aruma and Merum […]

districts of Bit Humri I leveled to the ground." "The land of Bit-Humri (Israel), all [of whose] cities I leveled [to the ground] in my former campaigns...I plundered its livestock, and I spared only (isolated) Samaria. [I/They overthrew Pek]ah their king.

The Land of Omri (Israel)

all its people together with their goods

I carried off to Assyria.

Pekah, their king they deposed,

and I placed Hoshea over them as king.

10 talents of gold, 10 talents of silver,

as their tribute I received from them,

and to Assyria I carried them.

[Bit -Khumria] (Israel) all of those cities, on my former campaigns I had added [to my territory]... into captivity had carried, [and] had left for him Samaria alone, Pekah their king [they had cast away].

Illustration of Assyrian relief of Tiglath-Pileser III besieging a town. (Public Domain)

While Tiglath-pileser took many people into captivity, he did not take them all. However, of those taken into captivity, he also mentions taking Israelite forces in his military annuals:

"carried off [to] Assyria the land of Bit-Humria (Israel). [...its] 'auxiliary [army,'] [...] all of its people."

From this small fragment, Tiglath-pileser III not only tells us that he deported a large amount of Israel's people, but that he also took the Israelite army and incorporated them into the Assyrian army as auxiliaries.

The Second Captivity

This was the beginning of a nine-year rule for King Hoshea in II Kings 17:1.

Hoshea had to pay tribute to Tiglath-pileser for putting him on the throne and making the kingdom of Israel vassals to Assyria again. When Tiglath-pileser died around 727 BCE, we can speculate that Hoshea probably stopped paying the annual tribute. This would have meant that the new King, Shalmaneser V, tried to extract tribute from Hoshea as well (II Kings 17:3). From the evidence in II Kings 17:3, it can be said that either King Shalmaneser V or an Assyrian official had started paying visits at this time, not only to Israel, but to all the vassals of Assyria. By showing up with his army, he was making sure that those who had sworn allegiance to him in the past would continue honoring that allegiance to Assyria. It might also be possible to say that he was simply making his rounds, collecting gifts, as he was the new king in town. However, this did not last long, for we read in II Kings 17:4 that Hoshea stopped paying tribute and pulled his support from mighty Assyria.

Illustration of Hoshea, the last king of the Israelite Kingdom of Israel. (Public Domain)

King Shalmaneser invaded what was left of Israel. He sacked and destroyed the city of Shechem and the old Israelite capital of Tirzah. He also hit Hazor, tearing down the walls of the city before he besieged Samaria, the capital of Israel, for three years. Some say he died shortly before or after the fall of Samaria, though Shalmaneser is recorded to have taken Samaria ***"***On the 27th of Tebet Shalmaneser ascended the throne in Assyria and Babylonia. He shattered Samaria***."***

The first inscription is more about his military campaigns throughout his rule, found on a prism known as MS 2368, in which Sargon mentions conquering Israel, and thus refers to them as "Bit-Humriya" (House of Omri). The second inscription is the one most are familiar with when dealing with the fall of Samaria:

I besieged and conquered Samerina.

27,290 people, who lived in its midst, I carried away.

50 chariots I gathered from their midst.

The bereaved I taught proper behavior.

I appointed my commissioner over them.

The levy of the former king

I laid upon them.

When reading the inscription mentioned above, many fail to notice or maybe understand, that it took three years to capture the city. That suggests that Samaria was either heavily defended with large numbers of forces or that Assyria only brought a small to medium sized force to besiege the city.

After many years, the men inside Samaria grew tired, hungry, and most of all insane to a degree. The psychological impact on these men, living with the dead, decaying for three years, and having to smell it over a cold meal, made them prefer to die than give in. Finally, after three years and a new Assyrian king, the city fell to the besiegers. Instead of slaughtering the defenders, King Sargon II had something better for them.

Sargon II [right] and dignitary. Low-relief from the wall of the palace of Sargon II at Dur Sharrukin in Assyria (now Khorsabad in Iraq), c. 716–713 BC. (Public Domain)

It is interesting to note that Sargon used the people he captured from Samaria to drive the captured chariots. One-hundred men were the requirement for the 50 chariots. The remaining 27,190 most likely became an auxiliary unit for the Assyrian army. In addition, the same inscription found on the Nimrud Prism, says that Sargon captured 200 chariots and equipped them with the captured men:

[The inhabitants of Sa]merina, who agreed [and plotted] with a king [hostile to] me, not to do service and not to bring tribute [to Ashshur] and who did battle, I fought against them with the power of the great gods, my lords. I counted as spoil 27,280 people, together with their chariots, and gods, in which they trusted. I formed a unit with 200 of [their] chariots for my royal force. I settled the rest of them in the midst of Assyria. I repopulated Samerina more than before. I brought into it people from countries conquered by my hands. I appointed my eunuch as governor over them. And I counted them as Assyrians.

Nevertheless, what is interesting, (and something Stephanie Dalley points out in her article regarding the Assyrian tablets, *"Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry in the Armies of Tiglath-Pileser III and Sargon II")* is that Sargon seemed to have allowed the Israelite charioteers to retain their identity! This Israelite charioteer unit was possibly the only foreign unit to keep its national name in Assyria's main royal army, and it seems that this unit either was at Calah or stationed just outside Calah. Sargon must have respected them very much to give them such a position. Below is the chariot list that bares the names of the Israelites that Sargon II captured and incorporated into his royal army.

16 Ib-ba-da-la-a	Da-la-PAP
17 Ja-u-ga-a	A-tam-ru
18 PAP?-id-ri	Ab-di-mil-ku
19 EN-BAD	Na-ar-me-na-a
20 Gab-bi-e	Sa-ma?-a
21 PAPid-ri	Ba-hi-e
22 PAP-i-u	AP(gimir)13 uru SA-miri-ni

The author Bob Becking suggests, “The Samaritan cohorts according to line 23 are under the control of "Nebu-belu-ukin,” and can be seen as the remnant of the chariot brigades captured by Sargon. According to the editors, all personal names in this fragment are West Semitic. This view must be modified.” The interesting part in this list is the name Sama. Sama is speculated to be a form of the word or name for “Samaria,” who happened to be an Israelite who was the commander of teams for the royal Assyrian army. He had significant influence with Sargonid family for his name appears on administrative and economic inscriptions. Stephanie Dalley has this to say about Sama:

“From this evidence it is reasonable to suggest that Sama' the Samarian commander of teams who served Sargon as a reliable, professional soldier in the royal army of Assyria, was a close friend of the king and had access to and perhaps influence over members of the royal family. As such he would have had opportunities to become closely acquainted with Sargon's vizier Nabu-belu-ukin who probably acted as the first commander of the Samarian unit. Whether or not Sama' actually played a part in negotiating preferential treatment for Samaria, the evidence for his career is an indication of the important role played by Samarians in Nimrud and Nineveh in the late eighth and early seventh centuries.”

Scene from Ashurbanipal (668-627 BC) campaign against the Elamite city Hamaru, shows an Assyrian chariot with charioteer and archer protected from enemy attack by shield bearers. Assyrian relief from Nineveh. Alabaster relief, made about 650 BC. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Nevertheless, the names of the men who occupied the chariots for the Samaritan cohort are in question, but not entirely. In the Samaritan cohort list we find the name Ja-u-ga-a. This is Hebrew and means “YHWH (or Yahweh) is exalted.” In addition, we come across the name Ad-di-mil-ku, which seems to be of Canaanite background. The name also seems to have a Hebrew element. The rest of the names in the list fall in two categories, some are West Semitic, while others appear to be Assyrian or Babylonian.

The mystery of the lost ten tribes of Israel endures in legend today, but the provided evidence does show that those who had a military occupation and served the Assyrian army as auxiliary units seemed to have retained their identity. As for the overall Israelite population, they too can be found, but by an individual basis, based on who held different jobs of a non-military nature.

It appears that the so-called “Lost Ten Tribes of Israel” were never lost. Instead, they served, and over a generation or two, integrated within the local Assyrian populations, eventually losing their identity.

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About the Author

CAM REA lives in Indiana. He is a Military Historian.

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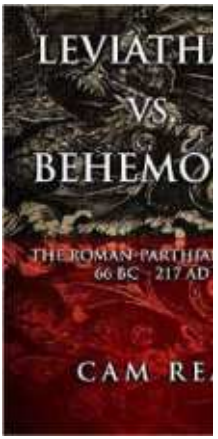
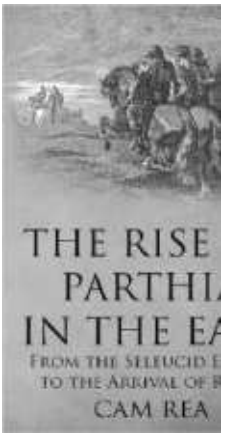
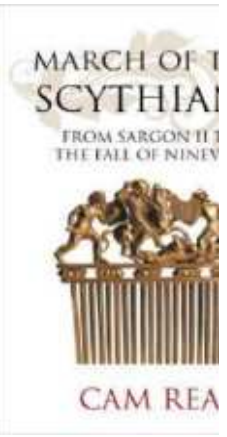
His publications include:







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Forthcoming publication:

The Wars of Israel: A Military and Political History from Judges to Solomon (2016)

The Hidden Message in Khafre's Pyramid

By Armando Mei

In Egypt, in the middle of 2013, I was on a very important job: the Giza Pyramids investigation through mathematical proportional applications. I focused all my attention on the three mysterious and majestic pyramids, without exception.

The Sphinx and Great Pyramids of Egypt. (BigStockPhoto)

At that time, I believed in my heart that the buildings were keepers of scientific information, communicating the history of the pyramids builders.

Now, I know it for sure!

Mysterious Messages

In the last two centuries, scholars and alternative researchers found many of the secrets of the Great Pyramid, following discoveries of the inside chambers. They brought us to the core of

the monument, by revealing its architecture and engineering complexity.

Great Pyramid of Giza at night. (Flickr/CC BY-ND 2.0)

The building's external features are well known, particularly, the pi-Greek relationship between base and height, or the relationship with planet's geophysical properties, even its connection with the stars of the Belt of Orion.

The Great Pyramid is almost an open book, while the other two pyramids are still a mystery.

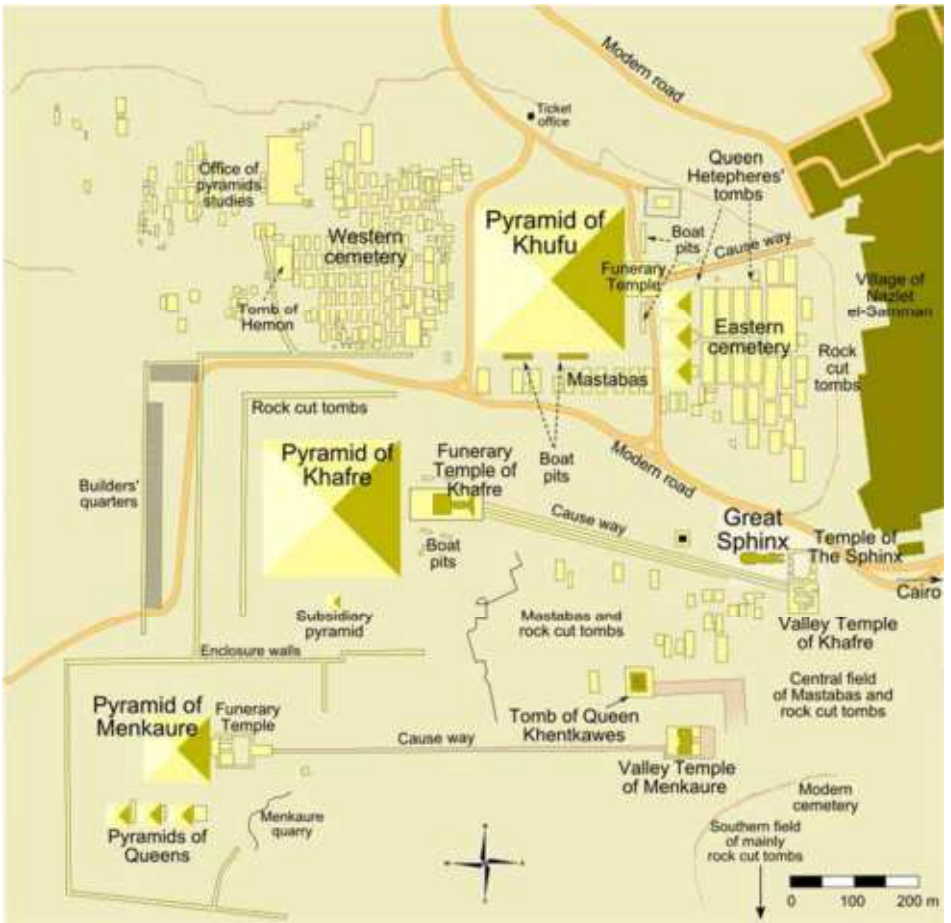
That is why I focused on the so-called Khafre and Menkaure's pyramids too; I believe they still preserved ancient mysteries to discover.

The Great Pyramid, through its scientific relationships, revealed to the world only part of its enigmas, so I had to follow up all scientific clues to discover the hidden messages coming from the Second and Third Pyramids of Giza.

Thinking like a Pyramid Builder

It was not easy to decide on a survey methodology to get a scientific result.

The first step was to provide the two pyramids' geometrical data to process. That procedure would allow me to demonstrate the existence of a scientific relationship that might unlock many unknown mysteries.



Giza pyramid complex – "Pyramid of Khufu" (or Kheops) refers to the Great Pyramid. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

I spent a long period gathering the external buildings measurements, subsequently further processed in Egyptian royal cubits. I needed to start thinking as the pyramid builders, if I wanted to find the truth.

The relationship between meter and royal cubit is 52,3 centimeters, and so the following table is given:

Kheops Pyramid **(a)**	**Meter** **(b)**	**Egyptian Royal Cubits** **(c)**
Base	230,33	440,40
Height	146,60	280,31
Khafre Pyramid	**Meter**	**Egyptian Royal Cubits**
Base	215,25	411,00
Height	143,50	274,00
Menkaura Pyramid	**Meter**	**Egyptian Royal Cubits**
Base	103,55	197,99
Height	65,50	125,24

Table 1

As shown in table above, the reference given in the first column (a) indicates the three major pyramids of Giza, that is: Kheops, Khafre and Menkaura monuments. The reference given in the second column (b) indicating measurements of base and height are expressed in meters, for each of them. The reference given in the third column (c) indicates results of measurements processed in Egyptian royal cubits.

The results took me another large step along the road to being able to discover the message coming from the pyramids. I was sure

to find the clue that would lead me on the verge of a millenary secret.

I also knew that it was like looking for a needle in a haystack! Moreover, even worse, I did not know either its form nor its content.

Kheops – The Great Pyramid

The enigmatic Great Pyramid, attributed to Pharaoh Khufu. (CC BY 2.5)

The second step was to elaborate results through a very easy arithmetic simplification between base and height, for analyzing their relationship consequences.

Jean Paul Bauval's research on the Great Pyramid architecture are very interesting, as are his analytic models of investigation. He has shown that base and height relationship expresses two prime numbers: the number 11 for the base and 7 for the height.

That is why I looked at his results as a reference point.

The following table expresses the prime numbers as a result of the arithmetic simplification process. The applied model refers to Great Pyramid values in Egyptian royal cubits.

Kheops – Great Pyramid	Egyptians Royal Cubits	Arithmetic simplification results
Base	440	**11**
Height	280	**7**

Table 2

Pyramids builders planned the monuments according to a scientific pattern, the aim of which was to convey a message about their knowledge. The number was used as a universal language, and it was applied in its simplest form so it could be known in the future.

Its proposal was scientific and, as we will see later, esoteric too.

I decided to apply the same analysis pattern to the Third Pyramid, or Menkaura Pyramid, going over the Second, or Khafre Pyramid. It was a random choice, maybe driven by the subconscious.

Menkaura – The Third Pyramid

Menkaura pyramid, the smallest of the three great pyramids of Giza (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Menkaura Pyramid is one of the most interesting monuments of Giza, due its shapes and the building materials the builders used for its construction. In addition, it is different from the other pyramids of Giza because of its size: the third pyramid is the smallest.

By applying the same analysis procedure as when I scrutinized the Kheops Pyramid dimensions, the following table is given:

Menkaura – third Pyramid	**Egyptians Royal Cubits**	**Arithmetic simplification results**
Base	198	**11**
Height	125	**5**

Table 3

The table results are very fascinating; firstly, because the Great Pyramid (Kheops) and Third Pyramid (Menkaura) have the same base relationship: the prime number 11. Second, the Third Pyramid height relationship expresses a different data: the prime number 5.

Once again, a prime number possessed a deep esoteric meaning as result of my investigation.

Khafre – The Second Pyramid

The Pyramid of Khafre and the Great Sphinx of Giza. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

It was time to study the Second Pyramid (Khafre). It is a majestic building, such as the Great Pyramid. It is also keeper of very interesting structural elements, making it famous across time. The main characteristic, well known around the world, is the limestone rock covering its apex. Probably, that monument, of about 143 meters high (470 feet), still contains hidden chambers in the upper part yet to be discovered.

The last step was to analyze the Second Pyramid through the arithmetic relationship. Results would allow me to compare the data and check for the existence of scientific evidence.

Results are expressed as follows:

Khafre – Second Pyramid	**Egyptians Royal Cubits**	**Arithmetic simplification results**
Base	411	**137**
Height	274	**137**

Table 4

I must say that I was astonished, when I looked at the data. The number 137, thus obtained, was very different in comparison with the previous data sets. It is still a prime number, but this time, its meaning has nothing to do with the prime number 11, 7 and 5… at least that is how it appeared.

Was it a scientific message? What was the Second Pyramid's purpose?

I had to find the answer within the fields of mathematics.

Mathematics and the Riddle of Prime Numbers

The formula for prime numbers—or pi-Greek function of positive numbers—is a formula generating the prime numbers, determining the amount of prime numbers preceding a considered value.

For instance, how many prime numbers precede the number 137?

I used the mathematical formula to discover the hidden message, based on the number 137, coming from the Second Pyramid. While Kheops and Menkaura Pyramid generated logical numeric values, closed to the first four prime numbers, the Khafre Pyramid gave, apparently, illogical results with no scientific connection with the others.

It looked like nonsense.

By applying the prime numbers function to the number 137, I got the following result: the number 33, (i.e. the numbers 11 and 3). Once again two prime numbers. Once again the number 11 as a proportional number for the base, and the number 3 for the height.

The pyramids of Giza gave the following sequence: 3 – 5 – 7 – 11. The first four prime numbers were enclosed in the pyramid proportions; the number 11 as numeric constant for the base and then different values for the height (3 - Khafre Pyramid, 5 - Menkaura Pyramid, 7 - Kheops Pyramid).

In addition, the Khafre Pyramid expressed a value, at the same time, proportional and inversely proportional to itself!

Results also confirmed that the building had a twofold function: "from the bottom-up and from the top down", "as above so below".

Giza really was the mirror of the sky? And what was the number 137 purpose?

The number 137 has a very amazing meaning and it can range from modern science to Kabbalah, from archetypes numerology to Eastern philosophy, from smaller particles to the law of Universal Balance.

Leon Max Lederman is an American experimental physicist who received the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1988. In his book, *"The God Particle",* he writes:

"*One hundred thirty-seven is the inverse of something called the fine-structure constant. This number is related to the probability that an electron will emit or absorb a photon. The fine-structure constant also answers to the name alpha, and it can be arrived at by taking the square of the charge of the electron divided by the speed of light times Planck's constant. What all that verbiage means is that this one number, 137, contains the crux of electromagnetism (the electron), relativity (the velocity of light), and quantum theory (Planck's constant). It would be less unsettling*

if the relationship between all these important concepts turned out to be one or three or maybe a multiple of pi. […]

This means that scientists on Mars, or on the fourteenth planet of the star Sirius, using whatever god-awful units they have for charge, speed, and their version of Planck's constant, will also get 137. It is a pure number. (…)"

Did the builders want to convey their scientific knowledge through the Pyramids proportions? Who built them? And why? Was their function connected to the number 137?

The God Number

Maybe, the last question can have a constructive answer in the esoteric and Kabbalistic meaning of the God Number.

In Kabbalah the number 137 has the following numeric sequence:

- 100 or letter Quf or Kaf
- 2 or letter Beit or Beth
- 30 or letter Lamed
- 5 or letter Hey or Hè

Now, let us check the significance of each letter:

- Quf or Kaf is the Hebrew letter having the archetypal meaning of "to go into", "to enter", "to cross";
- Beit or Beth is the Hebrew letter having the archetypal meaning of "the God House";
- Lamed is the Hebrew letter having the archetypal meaning of "Dimension", "Measure";

- Hey or Hè is the Hebrew letter having the archetypal meaning of “Life”.

Thus, the Kabalistic meaning of the number 137 is “*To go into the God House of dimension of Life*”.

Here is one of the messages that the lost Civilization of the Pyramids want to convey. The message is written in the Second Pyramid’s proportions.

The above image refers to the Hebrew letters to write Kabbalah, but 137 too. That means that Kabballah and 137 have the same meaning. It is the number of the Revelation, i.e. “to receive” the Ancient Tradition of the Tree of Life, from Adam to us.

It is time to investigate the letters with corresponding numbers according to the esoteric meaning.

- The number 100 is the square of 10. It has a particularly important consideration in the Pythagorean culture. It was considered a divine number because its connection with the number 10. It is “completeness”, the esoteric correlation between “one and zero”, i.e. the Universe Unity.

- The number 2 means duality, the unity of opposite, which generates the triad. The Hebrew letter Beit is the God House, the universal matrix containing the Cup of Salvation. It is the Holy Grail containing the Blood of Christ.

- The number 30 is the 3, following the number 2. Its purpose is the Life Cycle renewed: birth-death-rebirth. Number 3 is the geometrical number for tetrahedron, the base molecular structure, which is related to the God Name.

- The number 5 is the last of the sequence. As an archetype it is the Letter “E”, symbolizing Life, handed down as the Tree from which Adam got the Knowledge Secret. It is the number of the Pentacle, of the Holy Geometry, forming the five-pointed Star. Originally, it was expression of Love, Femininity, and also matrix of the five basal elements of our dimension: Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Spirit, making up our life. It is also the letter V, connected to the Taurus Constellation as the Goddess Isis Revelation as Hator.

As shortly shown, number 137 has many scientific, Kabalistic and archetypal meanings. Nevertheless, what are the other prime numbers’ purpose? What is the implication of the numbers 7 and 11?

- Number 7 properties are well known. In Kabbalah it is the letter Zain. Its purpose is eternity, transcending time. Do you remember the ancient Arab utterance concerning Pyramids and Time relationship? “Time is afraid of Pyramids”. Does the Pyramid’s function has a correlation with that hypothesis? Are the Great Pyramid Chambers the remains of ancient scientific process? Was the Second Pyramid, containing the number 137, part of the lost scientific process? Number 7 represents the Man in his Spiritual evolution, as Keter, the topmost of the Sephirot, the “crown” of the Spiritual Dimension.

- Number 11 is a very exhaustive esoteric number. It is the one following number 10, the Aleph following Tau, the

Beginning following the Fulfillment. The number 11 is Kaf, the Hebrew letter indicating the new Cosmic Cycle, “the Entrance into the Eternity”.

Our Ancestors told their history through particular numbers, by combining them with scientific functions. Over time, from their union, hermetic philosophies generated all around the world.

The Final Results

What is the result of my investigation into the Pyramids?

In my opinion, the Giza Plateau, with its mysterious and majestic buildings, seems to lead mankind to its origins, based on empirical correlation between science and faith, earth and heaven. We cannot yet assume that the pyramids were built by the Pharaoh’s workers around the fourth dynasty. The discovery of 137, hidden among the Second Pyramid’s proportions, is the evidence of complex scientific organization developed during the so-called Zep Tepi, the mythological Age of the Gods.

The number 137 is a new tile in my composite “Historical Time the Zep Tepi Theory”. This is another extremely significant step towards the aim of unveiling the origins of mankind. The next phase is going to begin. The new project of research has the Second Pyramid as target. The goal is to discover the possible existence of hidden and unexplored chambers in the upper region. Their possible existence may give more sense to the number 137.

It is a very difficult challenge, but the time has come.

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About the Author

ARMANDO MEI is an investigative journalist born in Turin in 1967, and member of the Scientific Committee of For Afterlife Foundation. He has worked with prominent Italian newspapers. A self-trained Egyptologist, he has worked on many research projects that were the seed for his book (Italian version): *"36.420 B.C - Le Piramidi Satellite ed il Codice Segreto"* with a Preface by Ph.D. Lloyd Knutson (Entomologist-Scientist). In scientific terms, the book describes a revolutionary discovery about one of the possible functions of the Pyramids of Giza.

Armando Mei was speaker at the International Conference on Ancient Studies, Zayed University, Dubai in 2010. He wrote several articles about the quests of Ancient Civilizations.

In 2011, he published his second book (Italian version): *"Oltre le Nebbie del Tempo"* in which he explains the discovery of the monument connected to Sirius; and in 2013, his third book (Italian version): *"La Porta del Cielo"*, he describes the alchemical process originating in the chambers of the Great Pyramid, inscribed in an ancient book *"Rosarium Philosophorum".*

In 2012, he published two studies on the Pyramids of Visoko (Bosnia):

1) Astronomical correlation between monuments and the Arch of Orion, fixed in 36,420 BC;

2) Investigation on enigmatic stone found in Ravne Tunnel, reproducing an ancient astronomical map much older than 100,000 years ago.

In October 2013, Mei co-authored with Semir Osmanagich, the book (Italian version): *"Visoko: La Scienza occulta delle Piramidi"*. The book tells about latest discoveries in the Bosnian Valley. In his latest book published in 2014, *"Il Segreto degli Dèi",* he talks about the uncovering of the Primary Planning of Giza.

Since 2015, Armando Mei has been **Guest Author for *Ancient Origins.***

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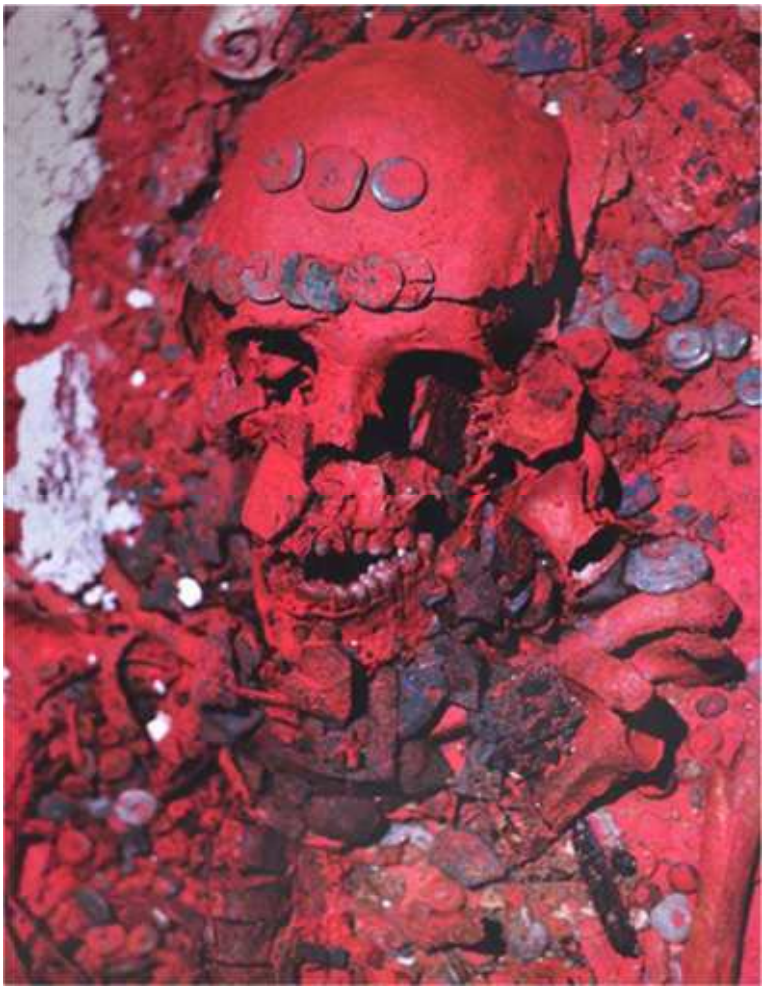
The Mystery of the Mayan Red Queen

By Leonide Martin



The Mayan Red Queen Skull. Image: INAH

An unexpected discovery of a royal burial inside a previously unknown substructure of Temple XIII in Palenque, Mexico, set off a decades-long archeological mystery. In 1994, a young Mexican archeologist named Fanny Lopez Jimenez was performing routine

stabilization work on the temple stairs, when she noticed a small crack partly covered by weeds and masonry. She directed light into the crack using mirrors and a flashlight, and peered into a narrow passage, six meters long and completely clear of debris. At the end of the passage, she saw another passage at right angles, and a large sealed door where they met. The next day her team chipped away stones making an opening through which they entered the passage, finding two empty chambers on each side of the sealed door which had signs of rituals being performed in front. They sensed that the sealed chamber held something important.

Temple XIII is a smaller pyramid structure adjoining the soaring Temple of the Inscriptions, burial pyramid of famous Mayan ruler K'inich Janaab Pakal I. Pakal's tomb was excavated in 1942 by Alberto Ruz Lhuillier, revealing the first royal Mayan burial found in a pyramid, and compared in its richness of jade, ceramics and jewelry to the tomb of Egypt's King Tut. The team made a small cut above the sealed door, threaded a long-neck lamp through and saw a closed sarcophagus nearly filling the chamber, covered with red cinnabar.

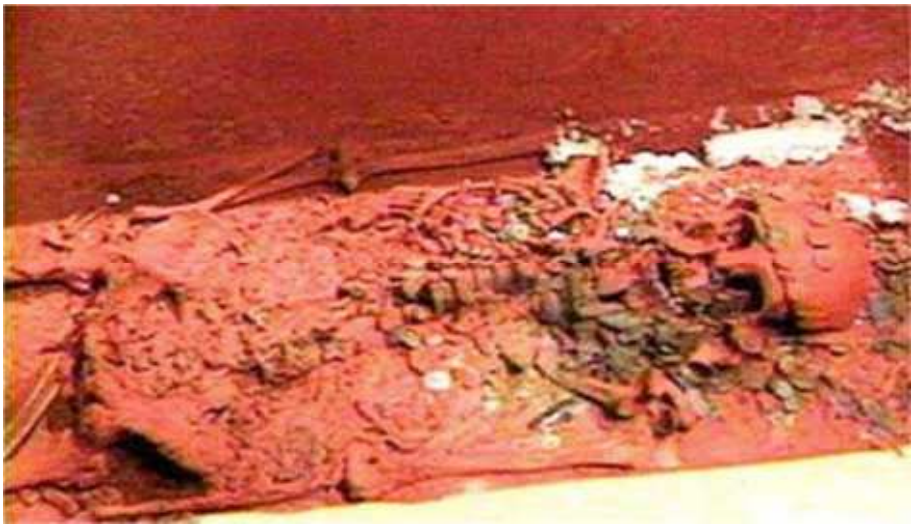
Cinnabar was used as a preservative in ancient burials. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Mercuric oxide (cinnabar) was used by ancient Mayas as a preservative in royal burials. Two weeks later, they made a larger entrance into the chamber and found many artifacts, including a spindle whorl used by women to weave, figurine whistles, and ceramic bowls dating the burial to 600-700 CE.

Archeologists Arnoldo Gonzalez Cruz and Fanny Lopez Jimenez in vault of Red Queen's crypt and opening sarcophagus lid. Image: INAH

These findings caused Fanny Lopez to suspect the sarcophagus held the remains of a royal woman who was linked to Pakal. If so, this would be the first Mayan queen's burial discovered. It took another two months for the team to remove the monolithic limestone lid off the sarcophagus, using a custom-built hydraulic lift. They beheld a royal skeleton not seen for fourteen centuries, lying on its back with bones completely permeated with red cinnabar.

It was a rich burial; a diadem of jade beads adorned the skull, hundreds of bright green fragments framed the cranium from a broken mask, and more jade, pearls, shells, obsidian blades, axes and bone needles surrounded and covered the skeleton. It was the biggest discovery in Mayan archeology in forty years.



Skeleton of Mayan Red Queen in sarcophagus, permeated with cinnabar. Image: INAH

Three months later, Mexican physical anthropologist Arturo Romano Pacheco was sent by INAH (National Institute of Anthropology and History of Mexico) to examine the skeleton. He determined from the shape of the pelvic bones and structure of jaw and skull that it was a woman. Fanny Lopez was thrilled; she had found the first burial of a Mayan queen. But who was the woman? The crypt walls and sarcophagus were entirely devoid of hieroglyphs and paintings. This surprised archeologists, because Pakal's burial had numerous portraits of ancestors and glyphs detailing his entire lineage. There was no information to identify the woman, although several clues pointed to a relationship with Pakal. Her burial pyramid was adjacent to his, and they both had a monolithic lidded sarcophagus, jade masks, diadems and jewelry. Both their skeletons were permeated with cinnabar, and they were buried during the same time period. Though archeologists searched for a tunnel between the pyramids, one has not yet been found.

Archeologist Arnoldo Gonzalez Cruz, Project Director of the Palenque work for INAH, gave the unknown royal woman the nickname, "The Red Queen." There were four candidates for her identity, drawn from depictions of Pakal's family in his tomb; extensive hieroglyphic panels in the temple on top his burial pyramid, and relief carvings in other structures made by his sons. The candidates were:

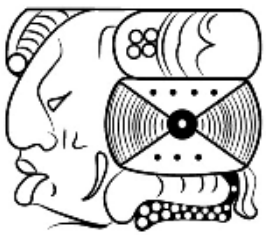
- Yohl Ik'nal, Pakal's grandmother - *Heart of Wind Place*
- Sak K'uk, Pakal's mother - *Resplendent White Quetzal*
- Tz'aakb'u Ahau (Ajaw), Pakal's wife - *Accumulator of Lords*
- K'inuuw Mat, Pakal's daughter-in-law - *Sun-Possessed Cormorant*

Yohl Ik'nal, the grandmother of Pakal, was the first Mayan woman to rule in her own right. She probably inherited rulership from her father Kan Bahlam I. Her birth date is unknown, but glyphs on the Temple of the Inscriptions East Panel record that she ascended to the throne in 583 CE, ruled for nearly twenty-two years, and died in 604 CE. She is portrayed twice on the walls of Pakal's sarcophagus, and her name glyph is included in the dynastic listing running around the edges of the lid. Another set of glyphs on the K'an Tok Tablet, Temple XVI, records that she supervised the accession of a subsidiary lord late in her reign. Her successful rule fended off attacks from Kalakmul, led to new construction and increased Palenque's prosperity. Mayanists disagree about dynastic succession after her rule. The interpretation I use holds that her son Aj Ne Ohl Mat succeeded and ruled from 605-612 CE, then his sister Sak K'uk became ruler

from 612-615 CE. Early in the search for the Red Queen's identity, Yohl Ik'nal was eliminated because she died more than seventy years before the tomb was built. Archeologists had determined it was not a secondary burial, in which the bones of someone who died earlier are entombed in a later crypt.

Sak K'uk, Pakal's mother, was born around 578 CE and became the second women ruler of Palenque. On the edge of Pakal's sarcophagus lid, she is listed as a legitimate ruler, her reign continuing alongside Pakal's for many years. The Oval Palace Tablet portrays only Sak K'uk and Pakal, depicting her handing the royal headdress to her son. On the Temple of the Inscriptions East Tablet, however, the ruler preceding Pakal is named "Muwaan Mat." Controversy among Mayanists continues about whether she actually was a ruler of Palenque. Initially the Muwaan Mat glyph was thought another name for Sak K'uk, but it also is the name of the Primordial Mother Goddess who gave birth to the Palenque Triad Gods, from whom the ruling dynasty descended. My interpretation, following the work of Gerardo Aldana, is that Sak K'uk invoked the presence of the Goddess to "co-rule" with her during difficult times when she could not perform required ceremonies. In 611 CE, Palenque suffered a devastating defeat by Kalakmul, in which her brother, Aj Ne Ohl Mat, was captured and later killed, and the sacred shrine that served as a spiritual portal to the Gods and ancestors was destroyed. The city was without leadership and in spiritual crisis; Sak K'uk stepped in to guide it through chaos. She held the throne until her son Pakal acceded at twelve, most likely continuing to provide leadership for several more years. She died in 640 CE, within the time frame for the Red Queen's burial.

Tz'aakb'u Ahau (Ajaw) was Pakal's wife, coming from a neighboring city to marry him in 626 CE. The Temple of the Inscriptions West Tablet records her marriage and death dates, and she is depicted in carvings on two other tablets. On the Palace Tablet, she and Pakal sit on either side of their second son, K'inich Kan Joy Chitam II, offering him symbols of rulership and divine ancestry. The Dumbarton Oaks Tablet depicts this same son dancing as the rain god, flanked by his mother and father. From the Temple of the Inscriptions tablets, archeologists have deduced that she bore Pakal three or possibly four sons. Two of these sons became subsequent rulers of Palenque, but left no heirs. The youngest son, who died before attaining the throne, continued the dynasty through his own son. During Pakal's long life, he vastly expanded the city, creating a new central plaza complex and palace that are considered the most elegant of Maya architecture. Over a period of about 60 years, he restored the city's religious charter, built a new sacred shrine, and resurrected the collapsed portal, possibly assisted by his wife. Tz'aakb'u Ahau died in 672 CE, eleven years before Pakal's death in 683 CE. Pakal could have personally overseen her royal burial and the construction of her pyramid adjacent to his own. Many archeologists believed she was the most likely candidate for The Red Queen.



K'inuuw Mat was Pakal's daughter-in-law, marrying his youngest son Tiwol Chan Mat who never acceded to the throne. Little is known about this woman, who came from another city, possibly Uxte'kuh on the

Tabasco plains. Her husband was born in 647 CE and died in 680 CE at age thirty-three. The marriage was probably a political alliance. If they married in their twenties, then their union would have occurred around 670 CE. Their son who continued the dynasty, K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nab III, was born in 678 CE and acceded in 721 CE. K'inuuw Mat is depicted in a carving on the Tablet of the Slaves in Temple XIX. She and her husband are shown offering their son symbols of rulership and divine ancestry, and both are named in the glyphs above them. There is no record of when she died. She is a less likely candidate for The Red Queen, since both Pakal's older sons were living when he died and he had no reason to single her out for special treatment. Pakal had an unusually long life, ruling until he was 80 years of age. His oldest son, K'inich Kan Bahlam II, acceded in 684 CE at age 49, and K'inich Kan Joy Chitam II acceded in 702 CE at age 58. The next ruler was K'inuuw Mat's son, Pakal's grandson.

Narrowing the Candidates for the Mysterious Red Skeleton

Using archeological evidence, epigraphic data for dates, and a process of deduction, the candidates for The Red Queen can be narrowed down to Sak K'uk, the mother of Pakal, and Tz'aakb'u Ahau, the wife of Pakal. Both women played important roles in his life, and he acknowledged them in portraits and glyphic histories. But, such records were absent from the walls of her crypt and sarcophagus, so scientific studies were conducted on the Red Queen's and Pakal's bones. Cinnabar, mercuric oxide used for preservation, had penetrated into the bone matrix and colored the bones bright red throughout. For the Mayas, red symbolized sacred energies of blood, called *itz,* and was the color of the east, the rising sun, the renewal of life eternal. Between the red coloration of the bone and deterioration of bone matrix over time, it was very difficult to perform microscopic examinations.

Sak K'uk, Pakal's mother as depicted on the Palace Oval Tablet

Tz'aakb'u Ahau, Pakal's wife as depicted on the Palace Tablet

The first studies were of strontium isotopes, found in bedrock and varying with age and type of rock. Isotopes move from rock into soil and groundwater, are absorbed into plants and through the food chain. In humans, strontium isotopes in skeletal bones indicate diet during later years of life, while those in tooth enamel indicate diet during childhood. Geologically different regions have varying isotope ratios. Between 1999 and 2003, an INAH project extracted samples of bone and teeth from both Pakal and The Red Queen. Analyses were conducted by Dr. Vera Tiesler and Dr. Andrea Cucina, of the Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan. The strontium isotopes profile of Pakal's bones and teeth showed he was born and resided in later life in the Palenque region. The Red Queen's tooth enamel had isotope ratios for a different geographic region, typical for the western part of Veracruz. This indicated that she grew up in a different city, most likely Tortuguero or Pomona. The strontium isotopes studies indicated

that the Red Queen probably was not Pakal's mother, who was born and lived her life in Palenque.

Question remained about confirming The Red Queen's relationship to Pakal, since experts considered the strontium isotopes analysis to be circumstantial evidence. Something more definitive was needed. Further bone studies had to wait another decade, however, for techniques of DNA analysis to advance. Initial attempts to extract DNA from bones of Pakal and The Red Queen had been unsuccessful, due to the cinnabar and deteriorated matrix. A group of scientists had been working on techniques to analyze ancient biological remains. Dr. Carney Matheson at Lakehead University in Canada and his group specialized in studying the ancient biomolecules and processes of degradation, and developed new techniques for DNA extraction and recovery. They analyzed several bone samples taken from Pakal, The Red Queen, and three other skeletons from Palenque. Their sampling and DNA analysis techniques were successful.

In June 2012, INAH released a statement about the DNA analysis results of Dr. Matheson's group. The results "confirmed that there was no relationship between The Red Queen and Pakal." Since Pakal and The Red Queen did not share common DNA, she could not be a blood relative. This eliminates his mother, Sak K'uk, as the queen in the mysterious red-permeated burial. Most Mayanists now accept that The Red Queen is Tz'aakb'u Ahau, Pakal's wife.

Mask of The Red Queen, jade and jadeite, with diadem and earspools. Image: INAH

Facial reconstruction of The Red Queen, Tz'aakb'u Ahau. Image: INAH

But the mystery is not completely and definitively solved. There is some chance that the skeleton may be that of his daughter-in-law K'inuuw Mat, or another unrelated royal woman as yet undiscovered. Archeologists hope that a future excavation will discover the tomb of one of Pakal's sons. Specialists would then study the son's DNA and compare it with that of The Red Queen. If they shared common DNA this would confirm that she was Pakal's wife.

Temple of the Inscriptions (Pakal's burial pyramid, left), with Temple XIII adjacent (The Red Queen's burial pyramid). Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico. Image: INAH

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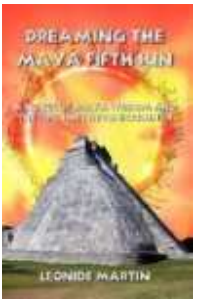
About the Author

LEONIDE (LENNIE) MARTIN, DPH - Retired California State University professor, former Family Nurse Practitioner, currently author and Maya researcher. My books bring ancient Maya culture and civilization to life in stories about both real historical Mayas and fictional characters. For historical accuracy, I researched Maya archeology, anthropology and history from the scientific perspective. For indigenous viewpoints, I studied with Maya teachers including Aum Rak Sapper, Guatemalan Priestess-Daykeeper and Hunbatz Men, Itzá Maya Elder-Daykeeper. I lived in Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico for five years to apprentice with Hunbatz Men, becoming a Solar Initiate and Maya Fire Woman in the Itzá Maya tradition. The ancient Mayas created the most highly advanced civilization in the Western hemisphere, and my work is dedicated to their wisdom, spirituality, scientific and cultural accomplishments through compelling historical novels.



I've received awards from Writers' Digest for short fiction and The Visionary Mayan Queen, which attained Amazon Kindle #1 ranking in April 2015. The Controversial Mayan Queen attained Amazon Kindle #4 ranking in August 2015. The Mayan Red Queen is a nominee for the Dan Poynter Global Ebook Awards, 2015.

Author of Mists of Palenque series about four great Mayan queens. These were among the most powerful women in the Americas, but few have heard of them. Two were rulers in their own right and two were influential wives of rulers, all in the dynasty of the most famous Mayan ruler, K'inich Janaab Pakal of Palenque. The discovery of his rich tomb in 1952 is compared to that of Egypt's King Tut. In four compelling works of well-researched historical fiction, the stories of Pakal's grandmother, mother, wife and daughter-in-law bring the complex culture, exotic royal courts, and amazing scientific accomplishments of Classic Period Mayan civilization vividly to life.

Three books in the 4-book series have been published. Each book can be read as a complete story, although the full richness of historic events and dynastic relationships will be better appreciated by reading them sequentially.

The Visionary Mayan Queen: Yohl Ik'nal of Palenque (Book 1)

The Controversial Mayan Queen: Sak K'uk of Palenque (Book 2)

The Mayan Red Queen: Tz'aakb'u Ahau of Palenque (Book 3)

The Prophetic Mayan Queen: K'inuuw Mat of Palenque (Book 4, summer 2016)

For more information about my writing and the Mayas, visit:

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Elongated Skulls of Stonehenge: A Forgotten Goddess Cult

By Maria Wheatley

Stonehenge, Neolithic and Bronze Age monument. (CC BY 2.5)

Stonehenge overlooks the windswept Salisbury Plain. Salisbury Plain is a dramatic landscape of extremes, containing the largest remaining area of natural chalk grassland in northwest Europe and also the largest military training area on British soil. Stonehenge is surrounded by military establishments such as Larkhill, Boscombe Down, Porton Down Nuclear Biological Centre, and Bulford Camp to name but a few.

Equivalent to Area 51 in the USA, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) manages the Plain, which is approximately 26 miles by 20 miles (32

by 32 kilometers) and within the military ‘Red Flag’ Danger Zone public access is denied.

However, certain parts of the Plain are accessible and it has a seductive beauty; the chalk grassland is charming and when you visit the Plain there is a special *something* that makes you feel alive. With no main roads just small track-ways the Plain is quiet, swiftly taking you back to a time that was.

Hidden from public view, numerous ancient sites are located within the Plain’s prohibited zone and their untold history will cast new light upon prehistoric mysteries and more importantly on the people that constructed them.

I am a professional dowser and using dowsing alongside other esoteric disciplines I discovered one of Stonehenge's best kept secrets – I found the Elongated People of Stonehenge and their Neolithic High Queen.

I am the only UK dowser to have found an archaeological find of such merit which led to further research. My findings have not gone by unnoticed in the lofty halls of academia. My book ***The Elongated Skulls of Stonehenge*** was requested by the Bodleian Library of Oxford University, The Cambridge University Library, National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales and Trinity College Dublin. That's every single large university in the UK!

Burials

I discovered that the long barrows of Salisbury Plain contained the elongated dolichocephalic skulls of the people that once lived close to Stonehenge and their history has gone by unnoticed for over 5000 years.

The largest long barrow ever constructed

Located on the edge of the Plain, an unassuming track leads to a forgotten processional way, which silently guides you to the largest Neolithic long barrow in the United Kingdom and to the memory of a long gone Neolithic woman. Her forgotten history reads as if it came from an Agatha Christie novel.

Whilst excavating long barrows, the early archaeologists repeatedly noted that the long mounds contained numerous communal burials sometimes as many as 50 individuals. When first

excavated it was thought that the colossal oversized ‘mega long barrow’ on Salisbury Plain would contain hundreds of skeletons, like a gigantic graveyard, full of Neolithic people who once lived and worked on the Plain. It didn’t.

Without doubt, it came as a shock to the early excavators that beneath the massive mound there was only a single burial. Instantly, it was realized that this was highly unusual and an extraordinary find. Generally, it was anticipated that the finds from a smallish long barrow would yield around 15 to 20 individuals. Whoever these people were, they must have been considered especially important, as a single burial within a long mound was exceptionally rare. A second revelation followed that stunned the Victorian archaeologists–it was a woman. We rarely hear of Britain’s prehistoric females, except for Boudicca the brave Iron Age Iceni Queen. We presume the leading figures, rulers and the architects of prehistory were male.

During the Bronze Age, ornate and beautifully crafted grave goods were invariably found alongside male burials. However, the largest barrow in Britain ever raised was the final resting place of a high profile woman. Not everyone in prehistory had a lavish burial. There were Neolithic flat graves (similar to today’s burial practices), a far cry from the well-designed long barrows, some of which housed the burial deposits of the elite. Considered important enough to be a single burial, this lady must have been royalty, a priestess, or a high–status member of the early Stonehenge community. She was special–possibly a Neolithic High Queen. Yet another shock followed. She had been violently murdered.

The largest long mound in Britain. Prior to early excavations the mound stood unmolested for more than 5000 years. Kindly reproduced with permission. Photograph ©2014 Busty Taylor

High Queen of Stonehenge

During my research, I noted that this section of the Plain is different to anywhere else in Neolithic Britain, which was generally considered to have been a peaceful utopia. Indeed, many places were peaceful, as signs of warfare are few, but not in the Stonehenge environs. Here certain people were despised, as murders were more frequent in this region than anywhere else in prehistoric England. Even more perplexing and adding intrigue to our enquiry is that the majority of murder victims were buried in relatively close proximity to one another. All of the long mounds close to the Neolithic Queen's long grave contained murder victims.

These people, probably the ruling class, had another thing in common: They had elongated skulls compared to the rounder skulls of the 'other' people of the Neolithic period.

In one long barrow that is situated high on the Plain, a large proportion of the local male population, around 25 men all of whom were in their prime, as well as some small male children, appear to have been rounded up and slaughtered in a genocide

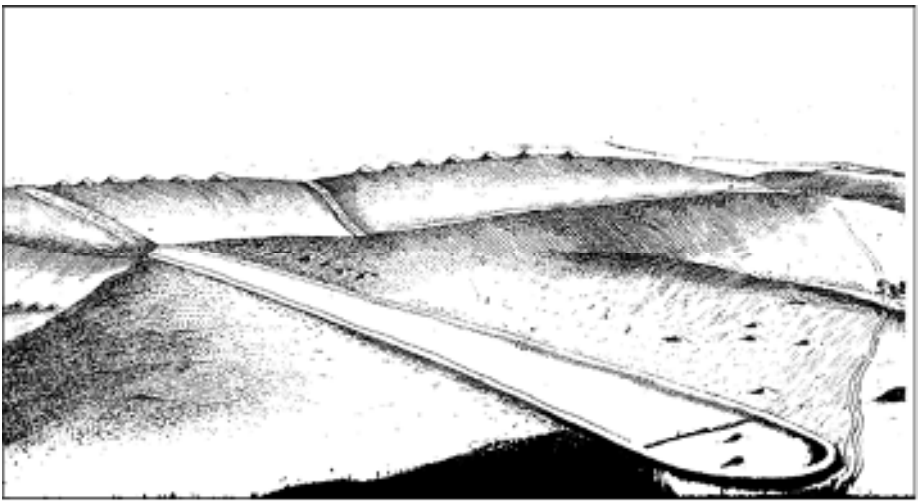
attack to eradicate the prehistoric elite of dolichocephalic skulled people that were possibly holding positions of power in the Stonehenge environs.

Other long barrows tell a similar story as there are signs of murder in most of the earthen mounds that adorn the mystical Plain.

Slowly and surely, these enigmatic people were killed. In fact, very old antiquarians called the long mounds of Neolithic Wessex 'Battle or Warrior Barrows' as they recognized the murders victims therein and thought they were warrior lords.

My research led to another startling conclusion about the Elongated people of Neolithic Stonehenge. The monuments that they constructed were also elongated in shape. This is a staggering new find that reveals the similarities between skull and monument.

The Stonehenge Greater Cursus



Cursus monuments were the largest monuments to be constructed on prehistoric British soil. They were gigantic. The Stonehenge Greater Cursus has been dated to circa 3800 BC which

formed a large enclosure located half a mile (800 meters) north of Stonehenge. Consisting of two roughly parallel banks and ditches around 310 feet (100 meters) apart the monument coursed for nearly 1.75 miles (3 km).

There are many other cursuses in Britain, the largest of which is found in Dorset which is over seven miles (ten km) long. They take their name from the 18th century antiquarian, William Stukeley, who believed them to be Roman racetracks. Cursus is Latin for running and movement. Today, nothing exists of the once gigantic monument which was aligned roughly east–west gazing towards the equinox sunrise. The western end was drawn by Stukeley which is shown in the illustration, but it was less round and more square-like than the illustration depicts. At the eastern end, there is a long barrow which is now badly damaged. The western end was ploughed out in the late 1940s and has since been reconstructed (poorly).

Ever obsessed with death, the archaeological explanation is that the long Cursus was used as a processional way for funeral rites or rituals. Odd then that the Stonehenge expert and top archaeologist, Michael Parker Pearson, points out the monument did not have an entrance. Perhaps, with its large chalk walls it was more like a machine than a monument. I have shown that the near-center of this monument is associated with radiation levels and that the nearby round barrows release strange frequencies showing our ancestors to be prehistoric physicists. Today, the area is bombarded by military electronic signals making civilian research difficult. Military frequencies change their bandwidth and signature; if they did not their intelligence operations would suffer. Thankfully, my research covers 20 years of serious data collection.

Half a mile (800 meters) north-west of the Stonehenge Cursus was once the Lesser Cursus, now sadly plowed out, which ran for a quarter of a mile (400 meters). The elongated-skulled people were designing and erecting the largest monuments ever constructed in prehistoric Britain, which were elongated in shape.

Another mound where the Elongated Ones were buried was Belas Knap in Gloucestershire. The front end has a 'false entrance' which was designed to *look* like an entrance however; it was also designed to be blocked. Inside of the blocked wall section archaeologists found a long-skulled person placed next to a round-skulled person. The Edwardian archaeological explanation of prehistoric peoples was that the ancient Britons had long skulls, these were found in long barrows, and the much later round skulled people were immigrants of the Beaker Culture. Recent carbon dating of the two different shaped skulls blew that old theory out of the water, as the skulls were contemporary. In prehistoric times, these people were living side-by-side.

Belas Knap long mound showing the false entrance. A side chamber contained several elongated skulls. Reproduced with kind permission. Photo ©2010 Busty Taylor

Belas Knap side chamber showing its elongated shape.

Lanhill elongated long mound, near Chippenham, Wiltshire. Elongated skulls were unearthed in the chamber, likened at the

time to the First Nations Native American culture. Open to the public. ST:87774. Photo ©2010 Maria Wheatley

The cult of the Goddess

During the Neolithic period at an unknown date, which was probably around 3000 to 2500 BC, the Elongated Ones were murdered. I think that these people were a part of a leading Goddess culture contemporary to the Maltese culture. A fleeting glimpse of the Maltese dolichocephalic skulls bears a resemblance to the Stonehenge people.

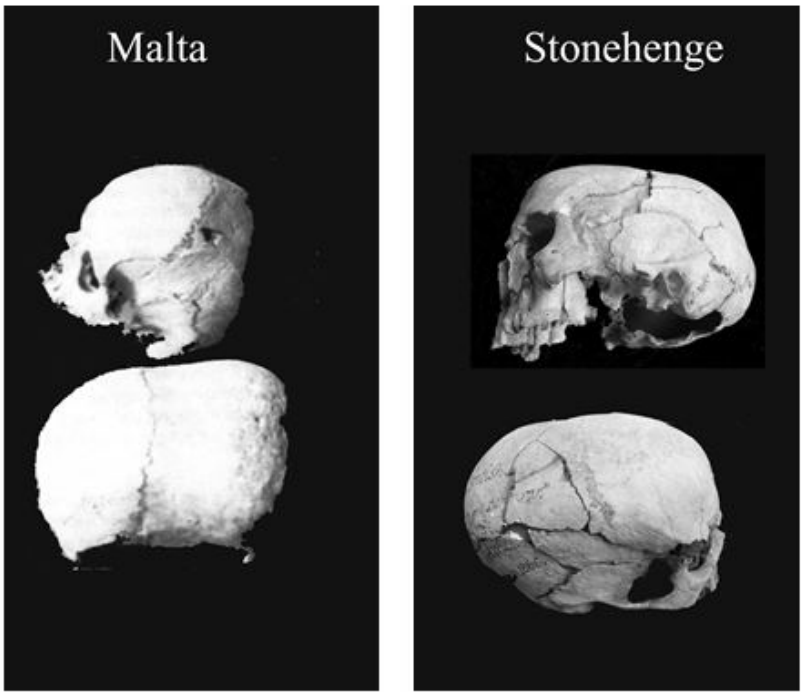


Photo ©2015 Maria Wheatley

Is there any evidence of a Goddess Cult in the Stonehenge environs? It is interesting to note that the orientation of the Salisbury Plain long barrows, as well as Phase I Stonehenge, is lunar. The sun once rose at 50 º at midsummer and 130º at

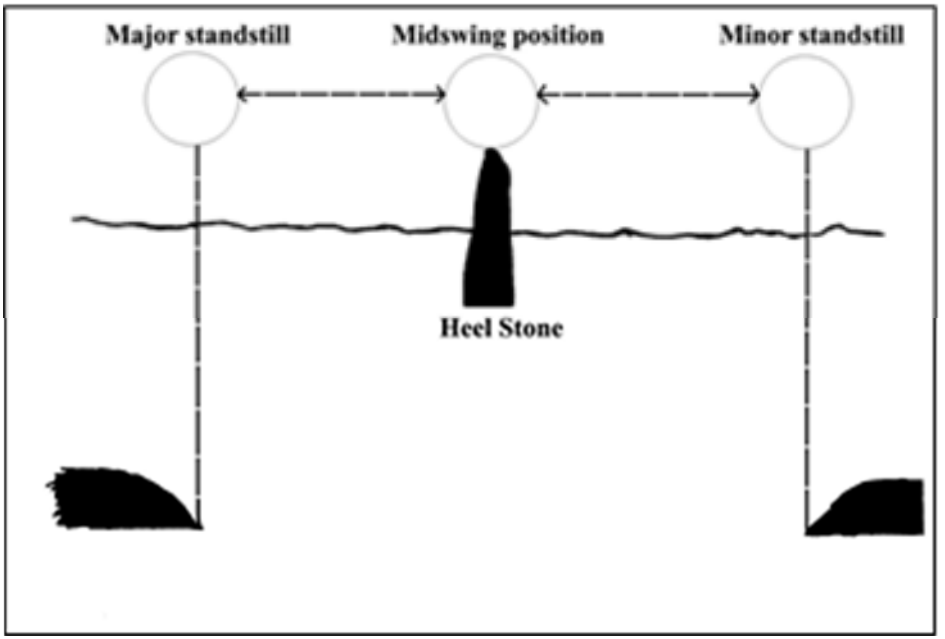
midwinter. Only 20 percent of the Stonehenge long barrows are either north or south of this arc. Whereas the moon rose at 42º at its most north-easterly to 144 º at its most south-easterly and nine in ten long barrows are orientated within the lunar degree range. Only one long barrow called *Wilsford South 13* faces 37 degrees northeast just north of it.

Seventeen out of the total number of surviving long barrows surveyed faced east. One could argue that this is the direction of the Equinox sunrise, and of course, this is correct. However, during its intricate cycle, the rising full moon shares this cardinal point on the horizon. Dawn's equinox sunrays light up the dark chambers of the eastern aligned barrows with splendid light. But, so does the full moon's silver light. Perhaps both solar and lunar alignments were intended. However, upon closer inspection the lunar alignments appear far more accurate.

The moon has long been associated with the Goddess and a matriarchal culture. Stonehenge Phase 1, which was a Neolithic henge monument that contained 56 magnificent bluestones, and the Heel Stone were aligned to the Moon. Neolithic pottery shards found in association with the Heel Stone show that it was erected at the same time as the nearby bluestone circle. Yet, we are all far more familiar with the Heel Stone's world famous alignment with the sun – which is actually less accurate than its earlier lunar orientation. In fact, it is a degree and nearly two meters (6.5 feet) from the correct position if intended as a solar alignment. However, the lunar alignment, which was a thousand years earlier, was precise. As testimony to the power of the moon as a symbol of the goddess cult, the Heel Stone was raised to mark the mid-swing position of the moon's northernmost moonrise. During the moon's complex Metonic cycle of 18.61 years, at the exact

midpoint, the full moon rose over the horizon and appeared above the tapering crest of the Heel Stone.

In the 1920's, Colonel Hawley uncovered six lines of postholes across the causeway, which were interpreted by the amateur astronomer, C.A. 'Peter' Newham, as temporary sighting devices used by Neolithic man to plot and record the moon's intricate cycle. At the winter solstice 2010, the full moon rose above the Heel Stone marking the midway cycle, and yet that major event went by unnoticed. In contrast, 30,000 people gathered for the less accurate solar sunrise that year! The Heel Stone was, and still is, a lunar marker-stone. It is tempting to think that the Neolithic High Queen of dolichocephalic skulled people saw this majestic event.



The Heel Stone and the Moon's Metonic Cycle. ©Maria Wheatley.

From the mid-swing position, the moon rises gradually move to the right until it reaches 'standstill' position, which takes around 4.65 years, before returning to the Heel Stone in the same time period. The same cycle occurs in the moonrise transits to the Heel Stone's left, giving the 18.61 years Metonic cycle.

Total control – a New World Order

Everything changed in the Bronze Age. The male-orientated Bronze Age Solar Cult dominated the communities of ancient Britain. At Stonehenge, the narrow lunar entrance that poetically aligned to the moon's pale, silvery light was widened so that the sun at Midsummer would become the focus. It still is. The Bronze Age people redesigned the existing megalithic features of Stonehenge. Additionally, as an act of supreme control and dominance, they systematically 'closed down' and eternally sealed *all* of the Neolithic long barrows in the UK. Any remaining elongated skulls were placed inside of the mounds as a new era of control was dawning. The once moonlit chambers and passageways of the long mounds were in-filled with tons of earth making them impenetrable, and finally the mounds were eternally sealed by placing a large blocking stone or tightly packed earth across the entrance. They would never be entered again. Not one long barrow escaped this fate.

It was not until the 1950s that the impacted earth from long barrows such as West Kennet long mound, near Avebury, was dug out by archaeologists. It is my opinion that the reason the long barrows were sealed around 2500 BC was to erase the memory of the Elongated Ones and their lunar goddess worship. The solar Bronze Age cult bore weapons and land ownership prevailed. Materialistic attitudes dominated the new group mindset and lavish jewels and gold were buried in the newly designed round

barrows; round like their skulls and the sun's blazing disc. The memory of the Elongated people faded. They were eradicated and forgotten until a dowsing rod found them and their story began to remerge from the sacred site that held them.

To some, Britain is often seen as a backwater of prehistoric culture, outshone by the later cultures of Egypt and South America. Yet it is clear from the evidence which I have presented that the Stonehenge Elongated Ones were the original Western spiritual leaders that created the largest monuments in prehistoric Europe.

It is not beyond the realms of possibility that some of the Stonehenge Elongated people escaped persecution or simply traveled overseas. The Celts are famous for their thick, flowing and beautiful red hair. Did they escape to inspire the dawning of a new culture in warmer climes? Or were they a part of a recognized global priesthood, and the Stonehenge people simply fled to the safety of their extended spiritual family?

Let us not forget, that these enigmatic and distant people selected the esoteric location of England's spiritual capital – Stonehenge - which would later become the ionic megalithic temple of Stonehenge.

Bronze Age round barrow. Skeletons with broad and round skull shapes 'brachycephalic' were buried within round barrows and the 'hyper-dolichocephalic' skull shapes were buried in the long elongated mounds. Photo ©2009 Maria Wheatley

Comparison of elongated skulls

Comparing the skulls of the Stonehenge people to that of the Alans shows a similarity. The Alans or Halani were an Iranian people of antiquity who were documented by the Chinese during the first century BC. They lived near the Aral Sea under the name of Yancai. Skull remains show how these people practiced skull modification. The illustration shows two central Alans skulls which are on display at Yverdon History Museum. The sketched skulls are from the Stonehenge environs, and the outer skull examples are the remains of the Neolithic High Queen previously mentioned.

Admittedly, the North African and South American elongated skulls are much larger and more pronounced than the surviving UK examples. Nefertiti's famous stone sculpture shows her long elongated skull and neck, which may have been artistically exaggerated. Certainly, Tutankhamen's skull, (Akhenaton's son), was identified, as a dolichocephalous cranium is additional evidence for a ruling elite status and is probably closer to the British Neolithic skull type which was said to be dolichocephalous and also 'hyper-dolichocephalous', more pronounced than Tutankhamen's skull.

It is a historical fact that the British Neolithic era of the Elongated Ones predates the Egyptian royal examples that I have quoted by

circa 2700 years and the Paracas culture by over 4000 years, which makes the hyper-dolichocephalous Stonehenge skulls amongst the oldest elongated examples in the world. Other comparison examples tell a similar story. For instance, the craniums of the Stonehenge people and the cranium samples from Malta are similar; although a closer inspection is required to fully analyze the skull types. Such contemporary comparisons may hint at a global priesthood. These people were also the intellectual designers of prehistoric monuments and geomancers that noted the energetic quality of the land and the astronomer-priests who studied the movement of celestial bodies.

Facial profiles of Nefertiti and a noble European woman

The skull of Tutankhamen and the Stonehenge High Queen
Photo ©2015 Maria Wheatley

Based on Tutankhamen's professionally reconstructed facial features, we applied his dolichocephalic skull features to that of a Neolithic woman of ancient Briton. Instead of making her hair long and loose, we decided to present her with a braid to show her skull profile. She may have resembled our noble Stonehenge High Queen as the skull shape would have looked similar; although obviously not identical. Certainly, our reconstruction gives you a visual impression of what the Stonehenge Elongated Ones may have looked like.

The famous reconstruction of Tutankhamen and our reconstruction of a Stonehenge Neolithic woman– a High Queen

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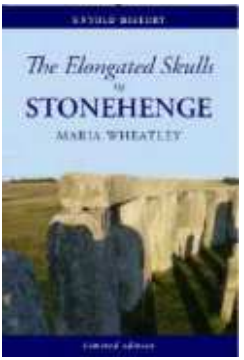
About the Author

MARIA WHEATLEY is a writer, dowser and researcher of earth mysteries specializing in *the geodetic system of earth energies* and ley lines.

***'The Elongated skulls of Stonehenge: A Forgotten Goddess Cult'* is a small extract from Maria's forthcoming book *From Stonehenge to Serpent Mound*. The book reveals extraordinary new finds that help solve ancient mysteries.**

Please support our research, buy the book or feel free to donate or contribute to our work by using our donation button on the home page. www.theaveburyexperience.co.uk



In the book, Maria reveals several new and fascinating discoveries and she also explores a profound global ley network which was engineered by the Elongated Ones. Later, this complex network was recognized by the Mediaeval Masons, Victorian Mystery Schools and Nazi Germany. Maria will also show you a long lost feature of the ancient British and Early Native American landscape that will change your option of ancient henge and mound sites and the prehistoric culture that designed them.

THE AVEBURY EXPERIENCE AND THE AVEBURY SCHOOL OF ESOTERIC STUDIES

Maria gives group and private tours of ancient sites and is the founder of The Avebury School of Esoteric Studies, affiliated to the Association of British Correspondence Colleges which offers certificated courses in dowsing, past life regression and astrology. www.theaveburyexperience.co.uk

esotericcollege.com is Maria Wheatley's new and exciting online college which offers professional full certificated courses. Maria is a second-generation dowser who was trained by European Master Dowsers as well as Chinese geomants. Maria combines eastern Feng Shui practices with her Western dowsing knowledge. Look up the new Master Dowsing and Celtic Feng Shui courses.

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A Mysterious Mummy in Cairo: The Surprising True Identity of Patriarch Joseph of the Coat of Many Colors

By Ahmed Osman

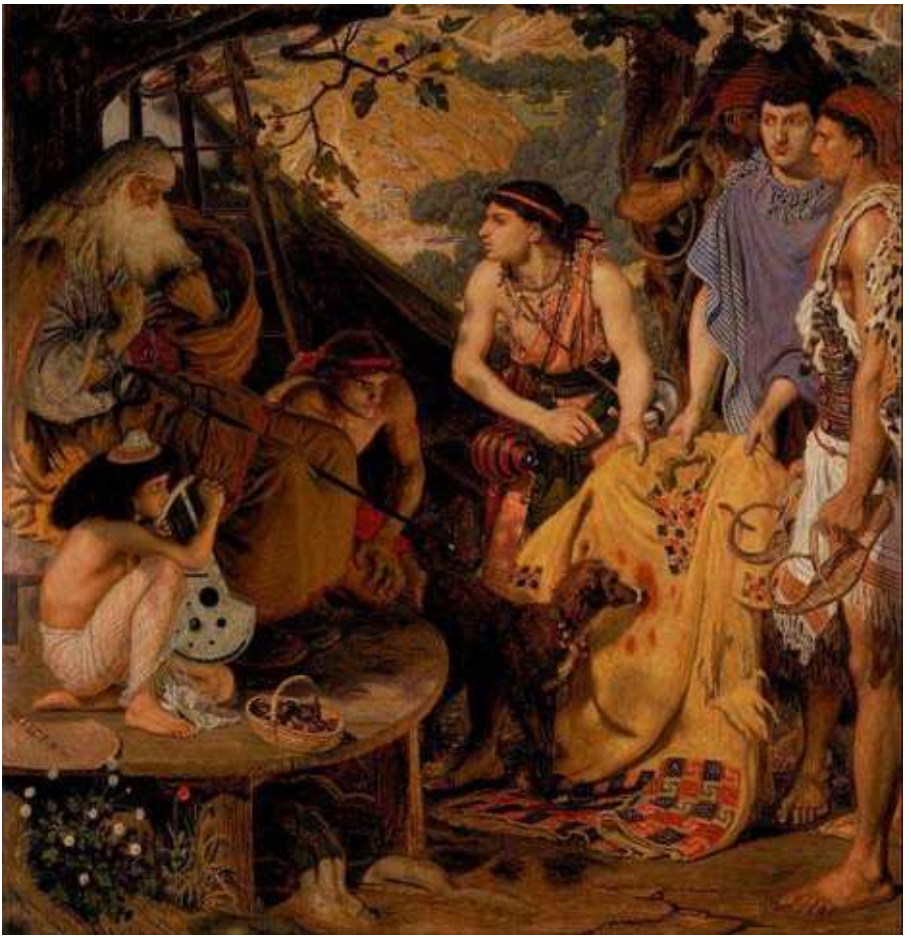
Golden sarcophagus from the ancient Egyptian Yuya and Tuya collection. (Flickr/CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Who was the king who appointed Joseph, of the legendary coat of many colors, as his minister? And during which period of Egyptian history did he live?

Since the start of archaeological digging in Egypt more than a hundred and fifty years ago, scholars have been trying to answer these questions. These were questions to which I devoted twenty-five years of my own adult life.

Patriarch Joseph is said in the Bible and the Quran, to have been sold as a slave into Egypt. It was his own brothers who handed him

over to a trade caravan, as they became jealous when Jacob, their father, gave him a coat with many colors. An Egyptian official bought the young Hebrew boy and made him overseer over his house, but when the official's mistress falsely accused Joseph of trying to seduce her, he was sent to prison. Two years later, Joseph was set free by the Pharaoh, who also appointed him as one of his ministers, when he was able to interpret the king's dream.



Painting depicting a scene in the Biblical myth of Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors. (Public Domain)

Father to Pharaoh

Later, as a result of a famine in the land of Canaan, the story goes that Joseph's brothers went down to Egypt to buy corn there. Joseph recognized Jacob's sons when they arrived, but they did not recognize him in his Egyptian costume; he kept his identity secret.

The famine in Canaan persisted, however, and caused Joseph's half-brothers to return to Egypt on a second corn-buying mission. On this occasion Joseph invited them to have a meal in his house and, in an emotional moment, he revealed his identity to his brothers. They were ashamed of what they had done to him, when they sold him as a slave, but he asked them not to feel any sense of guilt: "For God did send me before you to preserve life, and He has made me a Father to Pharaoh," he said.

"Father to Pharaoh"! It was this title that attracted my attention. Egyptian officials were usually given the title "Son of Pharaoh," but "Father to Pharaoh" was a rare title, and only few people had it. Immediately the name of Yuya came to my mind.

Yuya served as a minister and commander of the military Chariots for Amenhotep III (circa 1405-1367 BC) of the 18th dynasty. Among his many titles, Yuya bore one that was unique to him*, it ntr n nb tawi*, 'the holy father of the Lord of the Two Lands', Pharaoh's formal title. The reason for Yuya to get this unique title was the fact that the king, Amenhotep III, had married Yuya's daughter, Tiye, and made her his great wife, the Queen of Egypt.

Joseph and His Brethren Welcomed by Pharaoh. By James Tissot, circa 1903. (Public Domain)

Could Joseph the Patriarch and Yuya be one and the same person?

Yuya's Tomb

The tomb of Yuya and his wife Tuya was found in 1905, three years after Theodore M. Davis had obtained a concession to excavate in the Valley of the Kings. The site of the tomb, the only one in Egypt

to be found almost intact before the discovery of Tutankhamun's seventeen years later, occasioned some surprise.

Outer coffin of Yuya's mummy. Excavation assistant beside 2.75-meter (9 feet) outer coffin, shortly after excavation, circa 1905. (Public Domain)

An elaborate box from Yuya and Tjuyu's tomb bearing Amenhotep III's cartouche. (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Davis provided the money, while the actual work was carried out by British archaeologists. There is a narrow side valley in the Valley of the Kings, about half a mile long, leading up to the mountain. Eight days before Christmas of 1904, James Quibell started the examination of this side valley. A month later, he decided to transfer the men back to the mouth of the side valley, and by February 1 they had exposed the top of a sealed door that blocked the stairwell. Within a few days Davis and his group were able to enter the tomb, in which they found the sarcophagus of Yuya and of his wife, Tuya (or Tjuyu, Thuya), including their mummies.

The mummies of Yuya (left), and to the right, Tuya. (Creative Commons Fair Use)

Although both Yuya and his wife were known from Egyptian texts, neither was considered particularly important. Nor, as far as anyone was aware, did either of them possess royal blood—which one would expect when they enjoyed the privilege of burial in the Valley of the Kings.

Gilded cartonnage mummy mask of Tuya, wife of Yuya and mother of Queen Tiye. (Public Domain)

Yuya a Semite

Other than sharing the unique title of "Father to Pharaoh," both Joseph and Yuya were of foreign origin, and many scholars have commented on Yuya's foreign appearance. Arthur Weigall, one of the archaeologists involved in the discovery of Yuya's tomb, wrote: "He was a person of commanding presence . . . He has the face of

an ecclesiastic, and there is something about his mouth that reminds one of the late Pope, Leo III." Henri Naville, the Swiss Egyptologist, took the view that Yuya's "very aquiline face might be Semitic."

The difficulties scribes had with his name also point to Yuya's foreign origin. Eleven different spellings were found on his sarcophagus, three coffins and other funerary furniture. Egyptian names usually indicated the name of the god under whose protection a person was placed: 'Ra-mos', 'Ptah-hotep', 'Tutankh-amun', and so on. It therefore seems that Egyptian scribes must have named him after his own god, Yhwh (Jehovah), and that is what the scribes were trying to write, with spellings that included Ya-a, Yi-ya and Yu-yi.

The way Yuya was buried also points to his not having been Egyptian. His ears were not pierced, unlike those of most royal mummies of the 18th Dynasty, the time when Yuya saw service under both Tuthmosis IV and his son, Amenhotep III, and the position of his hands, facing his neck under the chin, is different from the usual Osiris form in which the dead man's hands are crossed over his chest.

The gilded cartonnage mask of Yuya, the father of Queen Tiye. Was Yuya more than just the father-in-law of pharaoh Amenhotep III – could he have been the Biblical Patriarch Joseph? (Public Domain)

Grafton Elliot Smith, the British anatomist who examined Yuya's mummy in 1905, raised the question of his non-Egyptian appearance. Smith wrote in his report; "His (Yuya's) face is relatively short and elliptical . . . His nose is prominent, aquiline

and high-bridged; . . . The lips appear to be somewhat full. The jaw is moderately square . . . When we come to enquire into the racial character of the body of Yuya, there is very little we can definitely seize on as a clear indication of his origin and affinities . . . The form of the face (and especially the nose) is such as we find more commonly in Europe than in Egypt."

Pharaoh also gave Joseph an Egyptian wife and an Egyptian name, the first element of which is "sef." Manetho, an Egyptian historian who wrote the history of his country to Ptolemy I during the third century BC, mentions that Amenhotep III had a minister called Sef. It seems that the name "Jo-sef" or "Yo-sef" in Hebrew and "Yu-sef" in Arabic, was composed of two elements: one Hebrew, "Yu," which is short for Yahweh, and the other Egyptian, "sef."

In the biblical account of Joseph the Patriarch, on his appointment as minister, he received three objects from Pharaoh as insignia of office, a ring, a gold chain, and a chariot. These three objects were also found in Yuya's tomb.

Although the royal ring was not found in Yuya's tomb, written text was found to show that Yuya was bearer of the king's ring. This is clear from Yuya's titles, "bearer of the seal of the king of Lower Egypt" as well as "bearer of the ring of the king of Lower Egypt." A significant find in the tomb also was a gold chain that had fallen inside Yuya's coffin, and come to rest beneath his head when the tomb robbers cut the thread that held it in place. A small chariot was also discovered in the tomb.

Age of Wisdom

Of Joseph's death and burial, the Book of Genesis says that he died at the age of a hundred and ten: "They embalmed him and put him in a coffin in Egypt." Since as long ago as 1865, when the British

scholar Charles W. Goodwin suggested the age the biblical narrator assigned to Joseph at the time of his death was a reflection of the Egyptian tradition, this idea has become increasingly accepted by Egyptologists.

Sir Grafton Elliott Smith, the anatomist who examined Yuya's mummy after its discovery, said in his medical report that Yuya was not less than sixty at the time of his death. Smith was unable by facial appearance alone to judge the exact age, but Henri Naville, who translated Yuya's copy of *The Book of the Dead*, wrote in his subsequent commentary on it that ". . . the artist wished to indicate that Iouiya (Yuya) was a very old man when he died: therefore, he made him quite a white wig . . ."

Such apparent discrepancies about age are easily resolved. As the average age to which people lived at the time was about thirty-five, ancient Egyptians considered old age to be a sign of wisdom, and those who attained long life were looked upon as holy figures. Both Joseph and Yuya were considered wise by Pharaoh.

Of Joseph he said: "There is nobody as discreet and wise as you." Yuya is described on his funerary papyrus as "the only wise who loves his god." The age Egyptians ascribed to those who lived to be wise was one hundred and ten, irrespective of how old they actually were. Amenhotep son of Habu, an Egyptian magician in Yuya's time, was said to have lived one hundred and ten years, although the last information we have about him puts his age at eighty.

The City with Many Gates

It is not only a comparison between the Old Testament account of Joseph the Patriarch and Egyptian historical records that point to both being one and the same person. According to the Quran, the

sacred Muslim book, before their second visit to Egypt, Joseph's half-brothers were given some advice by Jacob, their father:

"O, my sons! Enter (the city) not all by one gate: enter ye by different gates…"

This advice indicates that the city they visited on their trade missions, which had many gates, was either Memphis, the seat of the royal residence south of the Giza Pyramids, or Thebes, on the east bank of the Nile.

Egypt - Temple of Seti, east entrance, Thebes. (Public Domain)

The same story is found in Jewish traditions: "His brothers, fearing the evil eye, entered the city at ten different gates" (Midrash Bereshith Rabbah 89). As Jacob is said to have voiced his concern before his sons set off on their second mission it is reasonable to

assume that he heard about the nature of Thebes on their return from their first visit. Thebes was known throughout the ancient world as “the city with many gates,” and the Greek poet Homer mentioned it around the eighth century BC as “the hundred-gated city.” These were not references to gates through a profusion of walls, but to entrances belonging to its many temples and palaces.

The Time of Yuya and Joseph

As the name of Pharaoh who appointed Joseph as his minister is missing in the holy books, scholars looked for some other details in the story of Joseph, to help them in fixing his time. They noticed that the “chariots,” were mentioned three times in the Book of Genesis:

1 – When he was appointed as a minister, Pharaoh gave Joseph a chariot,

2 – Joseph used a chariot to go out to welcome his father Jacob and the rest of the tribe of Israel when they arrived in Egypt,

3 – When the Israelites went to bury their father Jacob in Canaan, Joseph took with him “both chariots and horsemen.”

The Bible story of Joseph’s elevation to high office states that Pharaoh provided him with a second chariot to ride in. This suggests his responsibility for the Chariotry, a view supported by the fact that a chariot was found in Yuya’s tomb. It was the custom in ancient Egypt to place in a tomb objects that had a special significance in the life of a dead person.

Early Egyptologists, however, were deceived when they attempted to fix Joseph’s time in the light of this information. For up to a decade or two ago, it was thought that the Hyksos kings who ruled Egypt for about a century and half before the 18th dynasty kicked them out, were the first to introduce the chariot

into Egypt. As the Hyksos were themselves of Canaanite origin, it was easy to place Joseph the Hebrew during the period of their rule in Egypt. However, all Hyksos sites at the eastern Nile Delta have now been excavated, and no remains of chariots have been found in any of them; neither any written nor drawn reference to chariots. It is now generally accepted that the Egyptian kings of the 18th dynasty were the first to introduce the chariot.

Ancient Egyptian chariots. (Public Domain)

On the other hand, it has also been established that it was only in the later 18th Dynasty, the time when Yuya lived, that Chariotry became separated from the infantry as a military arm, and that Yuya, as chief minister to Amenhotep III, was the first person we know of to bear the titles Deputy of His Majesty in the Chariotry.

Thus, the similarity between Yuya of the Egyptian 18th Dynasty and Joseph of the Bible, indicates that both characters must have represented one person.

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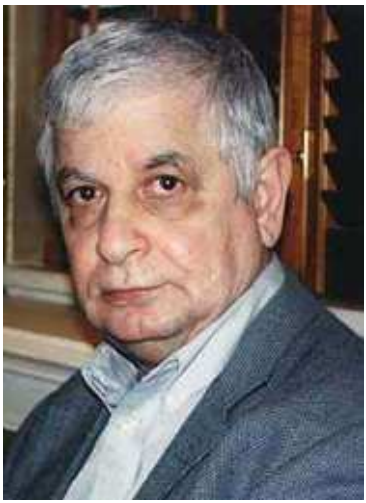
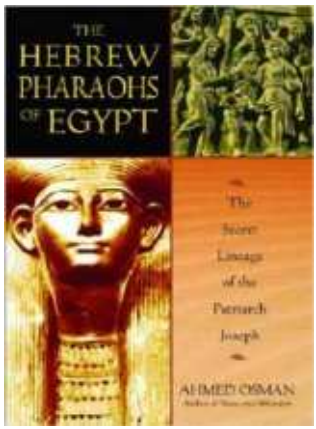
About the Author



AHMED OSMAN is an Egyptian-born author who has been trying to find the link between the stories of the Bible and ancient Egyptian history. Born in Cairo in 1934, he studied law in the university before working as a journalist. He is author of the book, *The Hebrew Pharaohs of Egypt.*

He moved to London in 1965, where he joined the Egypt Exploration Society, and studied the history and language of ancient Egypt. He also taught himself biblical Hebrew, and researched the history of both the Bible and the Quran, before trying to look for origin of the biblical stories in Egyptian sources.



His first hypothesis was that Patriarch Joseph, of the coat of many colors, was in fact Yuya the minister of Amenhotep III of Egypt's 18th Dynasty. This was the subject of his first book *Stranger in the Valley of the Kings,* now republished in another title ***The Hebrew Pharaohs of Egypt***.

His second work claimed that Moses of the Bible was the same person as the monotheistic king Akhenaten, whose maternal grandfather was Yuya/Joseph. This was the subject of his second book *Moses Pharaoh of Egypt,* now republished as ***Moses and Akhenaten.***

His third work suggested that Jesus of the New Testament was the same person as Joshua the son of Nun and Tut-ankh-Amun. This

Jesus was not only a contemporary of Moses, but also his son. This argument was presented in a book *The House of the Messiah,* now republished as ***Jesus in the House of the Pharaohs.***

His fourth work claimed that Christianity came out of Egypt, not Palestine, and it was the Roman fathers who claimed that St Peter, rather than St Paul, was the apostle who spread Christianity to Gentiles. This was argued in a book called *Out of Egypt,* now republished under the title ***Christianity: An Ancient Egyptian Religion.***

His fifth book was co-authored by Robert Bauval, which exposes the many cycles of monument destruction and cultural suppression in Egypt, and gives details of vandalism of Egyptian antiquities and suppression of ancient knowledge. It is published under the title ***Breaking the Mirror of Heaven***.

His sixth book claims that he was able to identify the location of the city where Moses led the Israelites in their Exodus, out of Egypt. After 25 years of Osman's identification, archaeological findings confirmed his argument. It is titled ***The Lost City of the Exodus.***

Plumed Serpent: Ancient Bearded Gods of the Americas

By Brien Foerster

Moctezuma II, the last Aztec ruler, shown with beard.

It is claimed by some authors that white missionaries or "gods" visited America before Christopher Columbus. Authors usually quote from mythology and legends which discuss ancient gods such as the Mexican Aztec's Quetzalcoatl to conclude that the legends were actually based on Caucasians visiting those areas, and that the Caucasians were really the gods.

Rather than trying to account for all of the oral traditions in the Americas where accounts of foreign visitors in pre-Colombian times with physical characteristics quite unlike those of the local

populations occur and where, this book will focus on a relatively small geographical area. Due to the author's main area of expertise being that of the ancient people of what we now call Peru and Bolivia, the story of ancient visitation begins in the Lake Titicaca area, which Peru and Bolivia share. These two nations, and especially Peru, had likely the largest populations of people prior to the Spanish arrival, and boasted many great civilizations of which the Inca were the last, and perhaps largest. We will then travel along a northwestern path through Mexico and into the southwest US where similar stories of Plumed Serpent characters existed in the past.

It is in no way, shape or form the purpose of my book to support racist concepts that Caucasians specifically arrived prior to the savage conquests of Columbus, Cortes, Pizarro and others and supposedly educated the local populations that were encountered. The "white god" and "white skin" terms may refer to people that arrived from distant lands and had skin tones lighter than the resident populations, but the idea that they were necessarily Caucasians has presumably no foundation in actual history.

What is intriguing is that there are so many oral traditions, especially those of South and Central America, as well as Mexico (which is technically part of North America) that describe foreign visitors arriving bearing light skin, often reddish or even blonde hair, and beards. The latter is curious because most Native men of the Americas genetically have little to no facial hair, and many accounts of these foreign visitors stress them having full beards.

Controversial "White Gods"

Spanish chroniclers from the 16th century claimed that when the conquistadors led by Francisco Pizarro first encountered the Inca

in what is now Peru they were greeted as gods, "Viracochas", because their lighter skin resembled a possible description of their God Viracocha. This story was first reported by Pedro Cieza de León (1553) and later by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa. Similar accounts by Spanish chroniclers (e.g. Juan de Betanzos) describe Viracocha as a "White God", often with a beard. However, whether the Inca in fact believed this, or the story was simply made up by the Spanish themselves is uncertain.

Moche ceramic vessels depicting bearded men. (Pattych /CC BY-SA 3.0)

British writer Harold T. Wilkins took the concept of the white gods the furthest, writing that a vanished white race had occupied the whole of South America in ancient times. Wilkins also claimed that Quetzalcoatl was from Atlantis. And the occultist James H. Madole influenced by Aryanism and Hinduism wrote that the Aryan race was of great antiquity and had been worshipped worldwide by lower races as "white gods". Madole also wrote that the Aryans originated in the Garden of Eden located in North America.

Some Mormons believe that the Aztec deity Quetzalcoatl, a figure sometimes described as white and bearded, who they say came from the sky and promised to return, was likely Jesus. According to the scriptural account recorded in the Book of Mormon, Jesus visited and taught natives of the Americas following his resurrection, and regarded them as the "other sheep," he had referenced during his mortal ministry. The Book of Mormon also claims that Jesus appeared to others, following his resurrection, even to the inhabitants on the "isles of the sea." This latter reference, may offer additional consideration of certain Polynesian accounts.

The Plumed Serpent

The Plumed or Feathered Serpent was a prominent supernatural entity or deity, found in many Mesoamerican religions. It or he was called Viracocha or Tunupa in the Inca and earlier cultures of Peru and Bolivia, Quetzalcoatl among the Aztecs, Kukulkan by the Yucatec Maya, and Gucumatz and Tohil among the K'iche' Maya, for example. The double symbolism used in its name is considered allegoric to the dual nature of the deity or person, where being feathered represents its divine nature or ability to fly to reach the skies and being a serpent represents its human nature or ability to creep on the ground among other animals of the Earth, a dualism very common in Mesoamerican deities.

Viracocha is the great creator deity in Inca mythology. (Public Domain)

The earliest conventionally dated representations of feathered serpents appear in the Olmec culture of present day Mexico (circa 1400-400 BC). Most surviving representations in Olmec art, such as Monument 19 at La Venta and a painting in the Juxtlahuaca cave show it as a crested rattlesnake, sometimes with feathers covering the body, and often in close proximity to humans. It is believed that Olmec supernatural entities such as the feathered serpent were the forerunners of many later Mesoamerican deities, although some western experts disagree on the feathered

serpent's importance to the Olmec. Oral traditions are unknown as the Olmec apparently died out or were absorbed into the Maya culture at some point.

The author at Tiwanaku in Bolivia with Sun Gate depicting Viracocha

The pantheon of the people of Teotihuacan (200 BCE – 700 AD) near present day Mexico City who were supposedly the Nahua, Otomi, and or Totonac ethnic groups also featured a feathered serpent, shown most prominently on the Temple of the Feathered Serpent (dated 150–200 AD). Several feathered serpent representations appear on the building, including full-body profiles and feathered serpent heads. And buildings in Tula, the capital of the later Toltecs (950–1150 AD), also featured profiles of feathered serpents. The Aztec (approximately 1250 to 1521 AD) feathered serpent god Quetzalcoatl is known from several Aztec

codices such as the Florentine codex, as well as from the records of the Spanish conquistadors. Quetzalcoatl was a bringer of knowledge, the inventor of books, and associated with the planet Venus. And the corresponding Mayan god Kukulkan was rare in the Classic era Maya civilization. However, in the Popol Vuh, the K'iche' feathered serpent god Tepeu Gucumatz is the creator of the cosmos.

Cortes as Quetzalcoatl

The stone head of Quetzalcoatl at Chichen Itza.

In his various incarnations, the feathered serpent was worshipped as the god of wind, the god of water and the morning star god. In 1519, the Spanish explorer Hernan Cortes arrived in Mexico about the same time the Aztec had predicted the return of Quetzalcoatl. This is common in the story of the Feathered or Plumed Serpent in many cultures; that he arrived, taught, left and then declared that he would return. Moctezuma II, the Aztec ruler, allegedly believed that Cortes was the "reincarnation" of the Feathered Serpent.

Moctezuma thought that Quetzalcoatl had returned to punish his people for misdeeds and thus he did not defend his city against the invaders. However, whether Moctezuma ever said or in fact believed this is unknown.

Very early drawing of Quetzelcoatl

As is often the case where oral traditions of indigenous people are recorded by and then rewritten by those that have conquered them, the original meaning is either skewed or in fact made up

altogether as a propaganda tool to belittle the descendants of those conquered.

A case in point of this is the false belief that the Inca of South America made human sacrifices of hundreds if not thousands of their own people, or those that lived within their Inca Federation in order to appease their so called “gods” or deities. Such an idea was in fact a cruel tool invented by the early Catholic Jesuit priests in order to psychologically conquer the people of the area. Very few, as in less than 10 Inca sacrificial victims, have ever been found by archaeologists as far as the author knows. And the same can likely be said about the Maya and Aztec people, as well as many others.

Three Symbols and Three Worlds

What does the term Feathered or Plumed Serpent actually mean? What is it trying to describe? As is often the case, oral traditions of indigenous people cannot be interpreted in a literal sense, nor should they be dismissed, as they often are as being made up stories or “folklore.”

It has been and is often the case that western trained academics, especially those in the fields of archaeology and anthropology, do not consult with indigenous people as regards how to properly interpret oral traditions, and the concept of the Feathered or Plumed Serpent is likely such a case.

For the Inca people and other cultures of the highlands of Peru and Bolivia, as well as the Peruvian coast, there were three animal figures that loomed prominent in their artistic and oral knowledge; the snake, puma and condor. Usually all three would be found together and three was their sacred number— whereas four was often the sacred number of other Native American people. As is

usually the case, the true meaning of what these animals represented and why there were three rather than another number is far more complex than what most academic books and tour guides will tell you.

Basically, and what you will often hear is that the snake represented, and still represents to some people wisdom, while the puma is a symbol of strength and condor that of spirituality. On another level they represent what are known as the lower, middle and upper worlds, as well as past, present and future. In a deeper way they also mean snake=subconscious mind, puma= conscious mind and condor=superconscious.

Bronze representation of snake, puma and condor near Machu Picchu

As the snake in many traditions is known to be an ancient animal and crawls on the ground, it best represents the wisdom of the earth, and overwhelmingly and in various cultures, deals with primordial life force. For the Puma these noble cats are symbols of courage and power, and were interpreted by the Inca and others to be the best symbol of the alert and conscious mind.

As regards the condor, the Andean condor is a national symbol of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuelan Andes states. It is the national bird of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador. It plays an important role in the folklore and mythology of the South American Andean regions, and has been represented in Andean art from circa 2500 BC onward. In Andean mythology, the Andean condor was associated with the sun deity, and was believed to be the ruler of the upper world, thus, the spiritual realm.

The Eagle and the Serpent

In Central America and Mexico, the snake symbol is very prevalent, as is the puma (or jaguar depending on the location) and the condor is replaced by the eagle. The current coat of arms of Mexico has been an important symbol of Mexican politics and culture for centuries. The coat of arms depicts a Mexican golden eagle perched on a prickly pear cactus devouring a snake. To the people of Tenochtitlan (Mexico City today) this would have strong religious connotations, but to the Europeans, it would come to symbolize the triumph of good over evil (with the snake sometimes representative of the serpent in the Garden of Eden).

The coat of arms recalls the founding of Mexico City, which again was originally called Tenochtitlan. The legend of Tenochtitlan as shown in the original Mexica codices, paintings, and post-Cortesian codices, does not include a snake. While the Fejérváry-

Mayer codex depicts an eagle attacking a snake, other Mexica illustrations, such as the Codex Mendoza, show only an eagle. In the text of the Ramírez Codex, however, Huitzilopochtli (sun and war deity as well as the patron of the city of Tenochtitlan) asked the Tenochtitlan people to look for an eagle devouring a snake, perched on a prickly pear cactus.

The Coat of Arms of Mexico. (Public Domain)

In the text by Chimalpahin Cuauhtlehuanitzin, the eagle is devouring something, but it is not mentioned what it is. Still other versions (such as the backside of the Teocalli of the Sacred War) show the eagle clutching the Aztec symbol of war, the Atl-Tlachinolli glyph, or "burning water".

Moreover, the original meanings of the symbols were different in numerous aspects. The eagle was a representation of the sun god Huitzilopochtli, who was very important, as the Mexicas referred to themselves as the "People of the Sun". The cactus (Opuntia

ficus-indica), full of its fruits, called "nochtli" in Nahuatl (the Aztec language), represent the island of Tenochtitlan. To the Mexicans, the snake represented wisdom, and it had strong connotations with the god Quetzalcoatl. The story of the snake was derived from an incorrect translation of the Crónica mexicáyotl by Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc. In the story, the Nahuatl text ihuan cohuatl izomocayan, "the snake hisses", was mistranslated as "the snake is torn". Based on this, Father Diego Durán reinterpreted the legend so that the eagle represents all that is good and right, while the snake represents evil and sin. Despite its inaccuracy, the new legend was adopted because it conformed with European heraldic tradition. To the Europeans it would represent the struggle between good and evil. Although this interpretation does not conform to pre-Columbian traditions, it was an element that could be used by the first missionaries for the purposes of evangelism and the conversion of the native peoples.

The actual interpretation by the author, if we remove all of the twists and turns of Spanish colonial polluted ideas is that the eagle and snake symbol could in fact represent the unity of the snake and condor, as in the merger of the subconscious and super conscious. Tenoch is said to have been an Aztec warrior/ruler who, according to legend, was given a vision in which he saw an eagle atop a cactus plant with a snake in its mouth and thus named the new Aztec capital Tenochtitlan.

However, the author learned during a trip through ancient sites in Mexico in February of 2015 from a local Native guide that Tenoch in fact means prophecy or prophet. Thus, Tenochtitlan would more correctly mean the “place of the prophesy” or “place of the prophets.” The act of prophesy is often best achieved through meditation where the conscious mind is cleared so that the subconscious and superconscious aspects of the mind may

interact freely. Therefore, using a symbol such as a snake and eagle intertwined could in fact represent a high state of being, rather than the worn out and erroneous "good versus evil" paradigm.

So, it could be that the Plumed/Feathered Serpent concept is one that represents a being, person or people of a very high state of mental consciousness. That the Plumed and Feathered Serpent story is found in various parts of South and Central America as well as Mexico and into the United States is of course intriguing, especially if the varied groups involved were not in contact with each other.

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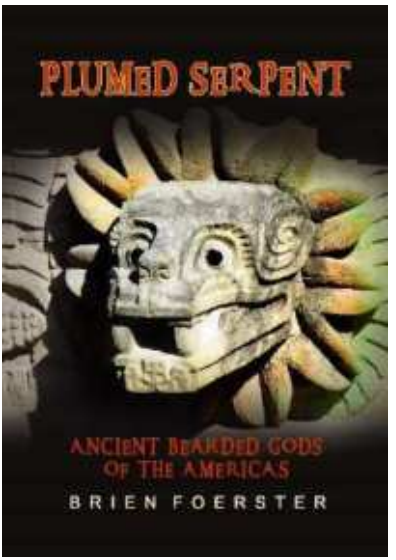
About the Author

Author Brien Foerster's newest book Plumed Serpent: Ancient Bearded Gods of the Americas will be out in 2016.

BRIEN FOERSTER was born in Rochester, Minnesota, U.S.A. but grew up on the west coast of Canada. At age 11, he became fascinated with the Native art of the Haida native people, and began carving totem poles, and other related art forms, learning from Native teachers. After completing an Honours Bachelor of Science degree, Brien decided to take up carving and sculpture full time, at the age of 25. This included the creation of 13 full size totem poles, dugout canoes, masks, bowls, boxes and other Native style works. In 1995 he moved to Maui, Hawaii, and was hired as assistant project manager for the building of the 62-foot double hull sailing canoe (ancestor of the modern day catamaran) Mo'okiha O Pi'ilani (Sacred Lizard That Pierces The Heavens.) This project lasted two years. There, having learned how to make Hawaiian outrigger canoe paddles from master carver Keola Sequiera, he started an online outrigger paddle business, which flourished internationally.



Peru became his next major area of interest. The study of the Inca culture led to his writing a book, A Brief History of The Incas, which is available on his website, www.hiddenincatours.com. As of January 2016 he has written a total of 16 books.

He also writes articles for Graham Hancock , and is associated with Lloyd Pye of the Starchild project, who analyzed the DNA of elongated human skulls of the Peruvian Paracas culture on his behalf. The preliminary results of this have been included in the published book that Brien co-authored with David Hatcher

Childress, The Enigma of Cranial Deformation: Elongated Skulls Of The Ancients. It is available through Adventures Unlimited Press .

He counts amongst his colleagues Stephen Mehler, author, archaeologist, ancient Egypt oral tradition specialist and expert on crystal skulls, Christopher Dunn, engineer and author of The Giza Power Plant, Dr. Robert Schoch, geologist and expert of ancient Egypt, Hugh Newman of Megalithomania, who he co-sponsors tours with, and many other well known “alternative” authors and researchers.

Brien has been on 15 episodes of Ancient Aliens, numerous radio interviews, will be featured on a new US series called Unsealed, as well as the forthcoming The Watchers, episode 6.

He has become an authority on the megalithic works of South America and the perplexing ancient Elongated Headed people of the area, and divides his time between Paracas and Cusco, Peru.

Marriage: Social Evolution or Deliberate Design?

By Dr. Rita Louise

The Marriage of St. Ursula and Prince Conan, 1522 (José Luiz Bernardes Ribeiro / CC-BY-SA-3.0)

Getting married is an age-old celebration, which commemorates the joining of two individuals together in matrimony. For many in today's society it represents picking out invitations, dresses, decorations, food and flowers, and finally 'tying the knot'. Yet

getting married is more than just fun and frivolities. It is a ritualized contract that forms a legal partnership between the individuals. This contract establishes the rights and obligations between the happy couple and those of any potential offspring.

Marriage is heavily steeped in local customs and religious dogma. It is believed that the institution of marriage found its origin in the ancient world as a means of preserving power, forging alliances, acquiring land, and producing legitimate heirs. It is also seen as a way of organizing families, and like most other social institutions, this time honored tradition has evolved over the centuries.

Where did the ancient rules of marriage come from? What was their foundation?

Origins of Marriage

The earliest evidence supporting marriage, and the marriage contract, dates back about 4,000 years to Sumerian law, and is documented in the Code of Hammurabi. This ancient legal codex contains 33 specific edicts that establish the rights and obligations of married couples and cover topics including bride-price, divorce, marital debt, incest and adultery. The well thought out concepts contained within this early text make it clear that the rules and regulations associated with marriage have a much older past.

The upper part of the stela of Hammurabis' code of laws. (Public Domain)

As we delve into the roots and history of marriage, a number of interesting facts quickly emerge. Early explorers, as they traveled the globe to investigate indigenous cultures, unearthed revealing information regarding marriage. They discovered that even the

most remote, seemingly primitive groups they interacted with had well defined systems that regulated marriage as well.

If we look at our nearest relative in the animal kingdom, the chimpanzee, the concept of monogamous pairing does not exist. It is not part of their genetic makeup. They do not possess an inner drive that propels male and female chimpanzees to bond with one another. Instead of creating a loose marital bond, their predisposition is to randomly mate with multiple partners.

If the compulsion to bond with our mate is not part of our genetic makeup, did we, as part of human social evolution, create societal rules to regulate marriage? If we did, one would expect the conventions, rules, requirements and obligations surrounding marriage to fluctuate from place to place and community to community.

Sarcophagus of a Husband and Wife, with Hymenaios, the god of marriage and ceremonies. (CC BY-ND 2.0)

Dr. Ashley Montague, a noted British-American anthropologist, stated, "*There are no societies in which marriage does not exist.*" He goes on to state, "*If marriage developed in a random, haphazard, evolutionary fashion, one might expect that 'marriage' would be found in some cultures but not in others. The evidence, however, simply did not support that view.*" The early systems of marital laws he uncovered were remarkably consistent around the globe, so consistent that early pioneers in the world of anthropology stated that this tradition bears the stamp of "deliberate design".

Social Controls and Taboos

The indigenous groups that were surveyed, in these early explorations, revealed a system of social control, which they believed, existed prior to our modern laws and other government-implied sanctions. They believed that these primordial rules, or taboos, evolved until they were codified into religious commandments and secular laws, many of which have survived until today.

Toiletry and Wedding. (CC BY 2.0)

Taboo (tabu/tapu) is a Polynesian word that is associated with a person, place or thing that is prohibited or banned. These prohibitions were impressed upon individuals at an early age and were maintained generation after generation. A vast number of things have a history of being universally prohibited. Some include touching or being exposed to a corpse or menstruating woman. These were perceived as being unclean and contact with them was forbidden. Two of the oldest, longest lasting and most consistent taboos found around the world revolve around having sex with a married woman (adultery) and having sexual relations with someone from your own clan. Both were expressly forbidden.

Adultery, a Forbidden Act

Many cultures consider adultery a serious crime. The United States military still has strict rules of conduct, which include infidelity.

Surprisingly, in the U.S., over one-half of the states in the union still have adultery laws on the books. Offenders of these seemly-outdated crimes can be punished by a fine or even jail sentence.

Adultery was a much more serious offence in antiquity. In the Bible, for example, the sixth commandment states, “Thou shalt not commit adultery” and goes on to inform in the eighth commandment that it is forbidden to covet your neighbor’s wife. Individuals caught in these compromising situations would be put to death. In the ancient Code of Hammurabi, if a married woman was accused of lying with another man she was prosecuted and drowned as punishment.

Detail of the Code of Hammurabi. (CC BY-SA 2.0)

We find similar laws and punishments in indigenous cultures. In Polynesia, it is death to touch the wife of another man. In Zimbabwe, the penalty for adultery is death. In Rome, adulterers were banished to an island. In Native American cultures, an

unfaithful wife would have her body mutilated, while amongst the Aztecs, they were often stoned to death. One common, although brutal form of punishment for doing the dirty deed was rhinotomy, the amputation of the nose. This disfiguring procedure was practiced amongst the Greeks and Romans, in Arab nations, in India, Egypt and Native Americans populations.

Interestingly, in many cultures, the prescribed laws and associated punishments were dictated for woman and less so, if not at all, for the man. Men, in many of these cultures, were often given the liberty to have sex with a slave or an unmarried woman. Once the woman married, she became taboo and was off limits.

Babylonian Marriage Market, by Edwin Long, 1875. (Public Domain)

The second part of the marriage proscriptions was to marry or have sexual relations with members of your own clan. This practice was especially prohibited.

Clans and Totemic Relationships

The concept of clans and lines of descent come down to us from antiquity. Each clan was associated with a specific animal, the

group's totem. It was believed that the group's totem animal was the embodiment of god on earth. Believers contend that it was from these sacred 'divine' animals that they owe their descent. It was through the use of totem animals that individuals recognized their relationship to one another, which helped them to not break this most sacred of rules. No one knows how or why the institution of totems, clans, and their associated regulations came into existence, yet the set of laws that are derived from this early practice are rich and complex.

Animal totem poles in British Columbia, Canada. (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Regardless of where you look, the laws, rules, regulations and taboos of a culture are always described as coming from the same source. Biblical texts infer that god ordained the laws by which we live. We find a similar celestial reference when reviewing ancient legal systems like the Code of Hammurabi. Indigenous cultures feared the wrath of god or divine retribution if they broke one of their prescribed ordinances.

If “God” prescribed marriage and morality laws, as early texts and customs suggest, what was his underlying motive?

Ancient Engineering

In recent years, theories have come forward proposing that a group of extraterrestrials came to the earth in our distant past. Proponents of this theory state that these otherworldly beings interfered with the evolution life on earth. Many contend that they, through the use of genetic engineering, created us. This line of thought, often dismissed or viewed as nonsense, has an ongoing growing body of evidence to support claims. If their assertions are correct, what are the implications of this breeding process?

First off, if modifications were made to the human genetic makeup, it implies that a group of genetically modified hybrid humans was introduced into existing indigenous populations. If this newly created species was allowed to mate randomly, the chances of spreading their updated genetic material could be limited. Did these early extraterrestrial engineers foresee a potential problem? Did they establish a system of rules that would ensure genetic variation?

Ancient marriage laws forced individuals to mate with men and women from different groups. This practice would naturally increase the distribution of their hybridized genetic materials. This method of gene manipulation (gene flow) may have ultimately altered the genetic makeup of an array of diverse populations, and, if given enough time could affect everyone.

We have no idea how far back in time regulations associated with marriage began. We also do not have a clear understanding of why it was created in the first place. Was it formulated to organize

family groups, forge alliances, or maintain power? Then again, was something more divine at work?

Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten, wife Nefertiti, and their children. (Public Domain)

Research suggests the holy, consecrated and commemorated union between two individuals preceded many of the laws, customs and traditions we have today. It also suggests that even though every culture on earth partakes and relishes the marriage vow, we have no clear understanding of why it began. Marriage, like many of the moral codes that underlie society, are not an inherent part of the human condition.

Did the gods impose the concept of marriage upon us? Our ancient texts and mythic history clearly state that our laws and moral codes were compelled upon humanity from an outside source – the gods. Was their underlying motive designed to stimulate gene

flow and transfer their upgraded genetic materials around the world?

While this is only speculation, it does answer the question of why we, like our ancestors, get married. It also explains the level of consistency, the stamp of “deliberate design”, we see around the world today.

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Bestselling author, **DR. RITA LOUISE** is the host of Just Energy Radio and the Founder of the Institute Of Applied Energetics. She is the author of the books:

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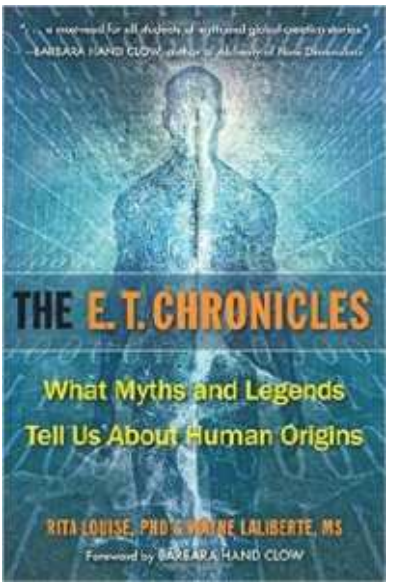

THE E.T. CHRONICLES
What Myths and Legends Tell Us About Human Origins
RITA LOUISE, PhD & MARNE LALIBERTE, MS
Foreword by BARBARA HAND CLOW

as well as hundreds of articles that have been published worldwide. She is also the producer of the videos *iKon: Deconstructing The Archetypes Of The Ancients*, *The Truth About The Nephilim* and *Deceit, Lies & Deception: The Reptilian Agenda*. Dr. Rita has appeared on radio and television and has spoken at conferences covering topics such as health and healing, ghosts, intuition, ancient mysteries and the paranormal.

For more information about Dr. Rita please visit **www.soulhealer.com** or listen to her live at **www.justenergyradio.com**.

Was the Devil's Dyke in Cambridgeshire once part of Troy?

By Hugh Newman

Megalithomaniac Hugh Newman examines gargantuan, linear mega-ditches around Cambridge, UK

Devil's Dyke circa 1853

In a small village northeast of Cambridge, near the most northern route of the ancient Icknield Way, a great 'dyke' emerges smoothly from the ground and rises to over two stories high. This incredible earthwork stretches for nearly eight miles, heading southeast to Wood Ditton. This huge bank and ditch are assumed to be of Anglo-Saxon origin and is the most complete of all the dykes in

Britain. However, some researchers say that Troy was in fact in this area, and the Devil's Dyke is proof of that.

We visited two parts of the dyke with author David Hatcher Childress and Jennifer Bolm recently, along with local archaeologist Michelle Bullivant. We started our survey at Reach, where the earthwork officially starts, however Michelle quickly corrected what was written on the information board by explaining that it once continued northwest for a few hundred more yards, in to the village to join up with the Fen edge.

Archaeologist Michelle Bullivant and Author Hugh Newman

Devil's Dyke was built in the 'prehistoric' style, looking like the builders were the same team who constructed Avebury henge or the ditches around Maiden Castle in Dorset, only not circular or irregularly shaped, but a dead-straight, mega-earthwork that disappears in to the distance. Whether the dyke was actually

constructed around the time of Avebury and Stonehenge, or whether it was a Saxon defense is still undecided by archaeologists.

"*There have been several archaeological excavations through the Dyke in the 20th century. In 1973, during the construction of the A14, an archaeological section was excavated and this helped to reveal how the Dyke may have been constructed. It showed that the first stage was a marker bank using topsoil from the immediate area. Material was then quarried from the ditch and was hoisted to the top of the bank in great tips on earth hauling ramps. Gangs of workers were responsible for different sections. However, it is thought that the defenses went out of use after only a few years but it did confirm a construction date in the 5th or 6th century AD*."

However, since then Roman coins have been discovered there, and under Fleam Dyke. Michelle Bullivant also told me that the Romans knew about how the dykes were being used by Boudica's army in the first century AD. In Fleam Dyke, some early and middle bronze-age pot sherds were discovered, so this could push the date even further back to around the time of Troy (1500 BC) or even to the era of Avebury (3000 BC).

The Devil's Dyke, Cambridgeshire, UK. (CC BY 2.0)

Who Made the Mysterious Creations, and Why?

When contemplating the immense size of the dyke, I often wonder what must have gone through the minds of the builders when the foreman said, "Ok, this dyke is going to be at least 30 feet high, with a rampart of 20 feet below ground level and, let's say, make it eight miles long?" The sighs must have echoed through eternity.

The official line that the "Saxons did it" suggests there must have been rather a lot of them, but why? That is the big mystery of this incredible engineering marvel. It appears to have been put there to stop something coming through from the southwest, as the ditch is on along the inland edge. Whether it was the invading tribes from the southwest and Queen Boudica was trying to protect her territory in the first century AD, or whether it may have been constructed much earlier, will be discussed shortly, but like with many earthen henges (such as Wandlebury,) defense may not have been its primary purpose.

Suggestions from various researchers propose it was used as a 'toll' for travelers upon the Icknield Way, as this ancient track had multiple pathways along its length, not just a single track. It's interesting to see on old maps that the different tracks on the Icknield Way do tend to stretch about as wide as the total width of the dykes, strengthening the 'toll' theory for the purpose of its construction, to be able to control trade and movement in the area.

Icknield Way, Lewknor, Oxfordshire, Great Britain. (David Hawgood / CC BY-SA 2.0)

History of the Dykes

During the Middle Ages it was known as 'St Edmund's Dyke', because it marked the limit of the jurisdiction of the abbots of Bury St. Edmunds. From the Middle Ages there are references to the 'Great Ditch'. During the 11th century siege of Ely by William the

Conqueror, it was referred to as 'Reach Dyke'. Devil's Dyke or Ditch is a post-medieval name, probably deriving from a belief that such landforms must be of supernatural origin.

In 'Legends of the Fenland People', Christopher Marlowe describes an old story associated with the dyke saying it was constructed by "*…a race of giants, renowned alike for cunning, strength and ferocity".* Here is the summary of the legend:

Devil's Dyke Aerial Shot (Courtesy CCC)

"Long, long, ago, when the area around Reach was a forest, there lived a chief called Hrothgar. He lived at a time when gods and demons were thought to control the earth and one demon in particular was terrifying - the fire demon! To the horror of the chief, it appeared that the fire demon desired his beautiful daughter, Hayenna. Hrothgar told his daughter not to worry, as his very good friend, the water god, was the sworn enemy of the fire god. He knew that the water god could communicate between the under and over world and would keep her safe.

One night Hrothgar had a dream. In his dream, an old man appeared and told him that the fire demon had a new ally in the tempest god. 'You must prepare for a great battle', the old man told him. The next day, Hrothgar told all the giants of the forest his plans. First, they cut down all the trees to make a wide clearing. During the next three days, they built a great ditch from the river to Mount Dithon (Wood Ditton), many feet deep and seven miles long.

The tempest god had watched their work with interest and scorn. Just as they were starting to tire from the hard work, he sent a great storm to blow down the trees on top of them. The storm also brought rain, hail and snow in great quantities. The giants of the forest rounded on Hrothgar, saying he should not have angered the gods and should not have crossed the powerful fire demon. 'Do not be afraid,' Hrothgar told them. 'My good friend, the water god will protect us.'

At that very moment, the rain ceased. Suddenly, under a great cloud of smoke, a terrifying wall of fire rushed towards the ditch. All but Hrothgar fled. Despite his fear, he came out from shelter and, with his bare hands, dug away the remaining strip of earth, separating the River Cam from the ditch. The water poured into the

ditch with a mighty, deafening roar! The fire demon was powerless against this mighty wall of water and the fire died down, the tempest stopped and his daughter was safe. Rejoicing, the local people placed treasured items in the new stream, to thank the water god for his help. The ditch, the Devil's Dyke is still there. The fire demon never troubled the population of Reach again."

However, the devil may still be around, for there have been many sightings of a large black ghostly dog with fire in his eyes. He is said to bound along Devil's Dyke, his blood-red eyes as big as saucers, guarding the dyke and, some also say, protecting treasure buried deep beneath it. The legends of 'Black Shuck' have also been recorded near Arbury in Cambridge and throughout East Anglia. Another legend tells that the Devil arrived at a wedding at Reach church, but uninvited as he was, the guests turned him away. As he fled in anger, his huge flaming tail scored a groove in the earth, forming the dyke.

The mythical Black Shuck, a supernatural dog that appears as an omen of great change. (CC BY 3.0)

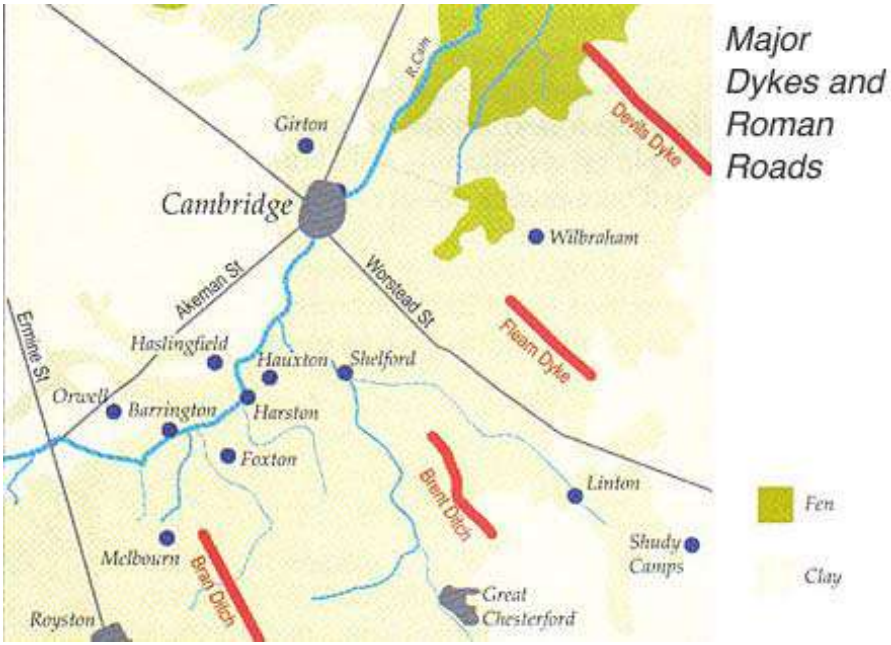
Legends of giants abound in the Cambridgeshire area. At Cherry Hinton, the sacred spring called the "giants grave" still produces clean drinking water and nine skeletons of ‘unusually large height’ were discovered in the 1800's in the War Ditches, an ancient earthwork upon the Gog Magog Hills. There are also the chalk hill figures, rediscovered by Tom Lethbridge in the 1950's at Wandlebury, who had heard about giants being buried on the hills. Children in the early 1900's were told to not go up the hill, in case they met the giants.

Fleam Dyke

There are several other similar dykes around Cambridgeshire, that lie roughly parallel and all seem to be centered on the Gog Magog Hills, where Wandlebury Henge sits upon. Northeast of Wandlebury is Fleam Dyke that runs for three miles (4.8 kilometers) from Balsham to Fulbourn and has a 20 to 25 feet (6 to 7.6 meters) high bank with a ditch.

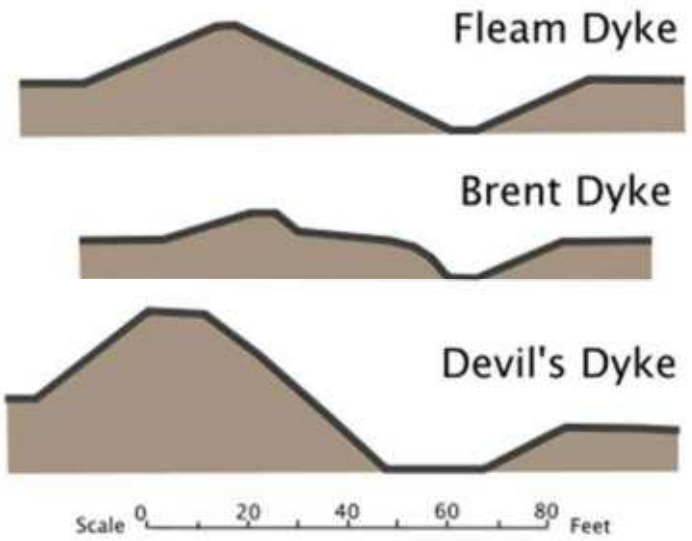
"The main part of Fleam survives today as a footpath and parish boundary, but historically the northern part was also the boundary between Flendish and Staine Hundreds. The Moot for these Hundreds was at Mutlow Hill, a Bronze Age barrow which had clearly been an important landmark for many centuries before its use as an Anglo-Saxon meeting place. Apart from the 4,000-year-old cremated burials for which it was originally built, rare third century BC Greek coins have been found close to the burial mound. It was reused in Roman times for a temple, and it is no accident

that Fleam Dyke passes right beside it. Mutlow rests on the top of a hill, and overlooks the junction of several routeways (including the Icknield Way) where they meet and cross Fleam Dyke."



Four Dykes of Cambridgeshire

Two smaller dykes exist southwest of Wandlebury, the Brent Ditch and Bran Ditch that once again, lie parallel to the Fleam and Devil's dyke, and stretch along the width of the Icknield Way. In 1841 Charles Henry Hartshorne wrote about the four dykes along the Icknield Way: "*For they are one and the same work, though bearing different titles at each extremity*."



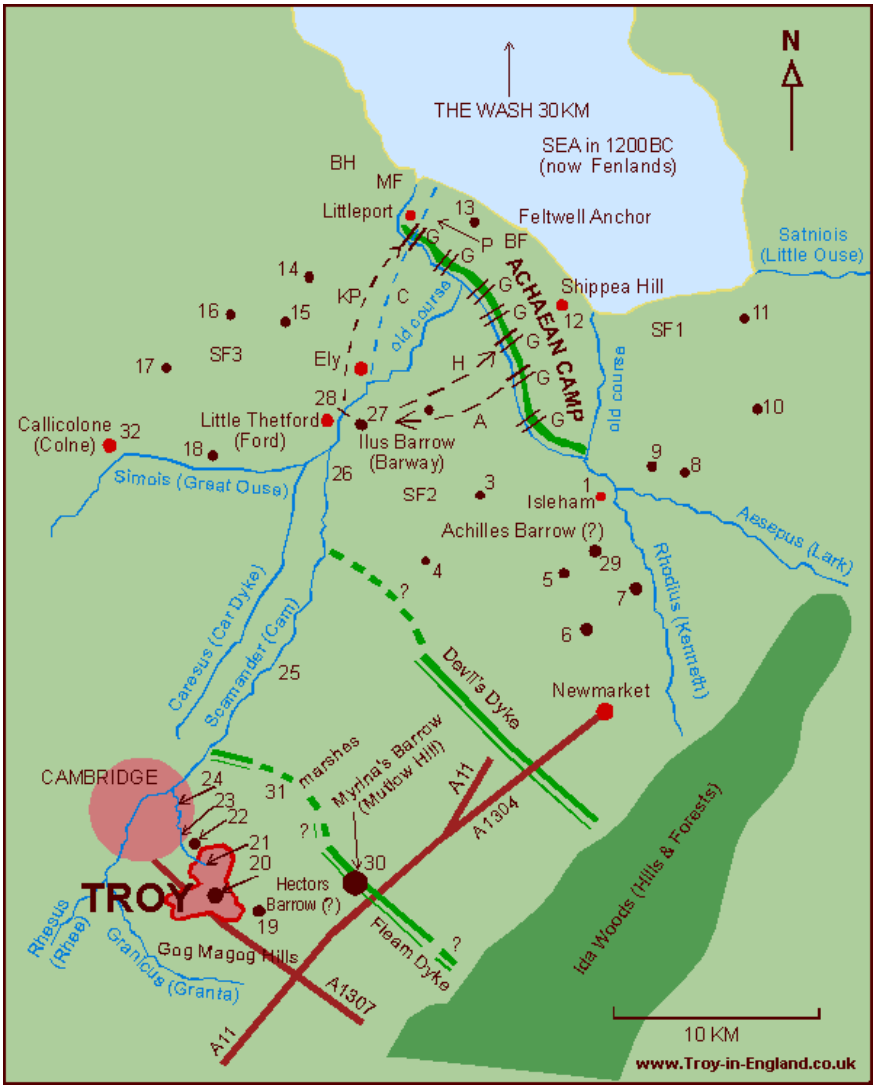
The profiles of the Cambridgeshire dykes, (based on Hartshorne's Salopia Antinqua, 1841.) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

City of Troy in England?

A startling theory regarding why the dykes were built is presented by Iman Wilkens in *'Where Troy Once Stood'.* He suggests that they were built by the Achaean invaders coming in from northeast coast preparing to invade Troy. (It should be noted at this point that he believed Troy was not ever in Turkey, but actually on the Gog Magog Hills around Cambridge). This deduction was made because the ditch was on the southern side of the dykes, which was the best place to have it to stop horse-riding warriors or chariots breaking through the defense, if they were coming from the southeast. As the Achaeans gradually progressed southeast, they would build more dykes, until the final battle of Troy supposedly took place at Wandlebury. However, it could be that Queen Boudica had the same idea, and was taking control of more

land, one dyke at a time, heading further south along the Icknield Way.

Boudica, leader of the rebellion against the Romans. (Public Domain)



According to Wilkens, the terrain, flora, fauna, climate and place names of Troy do not match those of the site in Turkey, but somewhere that has a green rolling landscape, bad weather, and was surrounded by circular earthworks and great dykes. Through thirty years of investigation, he re-plotted the site of Troy onto the Gog Magog Hills near Cambridge, with Wandlebury as its omphalus, or center point.

Three hundred pages of inspired and diligent research put this theory into the realms of possibility, but does the archaeological record and mythology of the area really support the idea that back around 1200 BC, a great war involving hundreds of thousands of warriors took place in this part of East Anglia? Most academics and historians sneer at such an idea, but a growing number of them are starting to take his theory seriously for a number of reasons.

One of those reasons is the fact that a huge number of Bronze Age artifacts, including armor and weaponry, have been found in the vicinity. Plus, hundreds of war-wounded skeletons have also been found on what now looks like an ancient battlefield. However, skeletons and some artifacts are not enough to confirm his theory, but, tantalizingly, the dykes regularly get mentioned throughout Homer's ancient Greek epic, *The Iliad.*

Wilkens argues, "*As these dykes obviously have no hydraulic function they may have had a military purpose by forming a barrier linking the river Cam to the west to dense forests on the hills to the east. The plain itself had already been cleared around 2000 BC according to archaeological research. Although the dykes and ditches seem to be meant as barriers to horse-drawn war chariots, it was never clear for which war. The dykes were not mentioned by Roman historians as they were probably of no use to the Roman army. But after the discovery of a Roman coin and potsherds under one part of the Fleam Dyke, the earthworks were believed to date from the time of the tribal warfare between the Mercians and the East Angles in the sixth and seventh century AD. Although this has been confirmed by radio-carbon dating of parts of the Fleam Dyke, elements of much older earthworks seem to have been used in the most eastern part of the dyke where a few potsherds of the early and middle Bronze Age were found.*"

The Gog Magog hills, Cambridge, England. (Public Domain)

One example that Wilkins points out is when the Trojans attacked the camp near the sea with their horse-drawn chariots, they were slaughtered by the Achaeans, and the frightened horses ran with their empty chariots over the wardykes, back to Troy. Literally translated, the relevant passage reads as follows:

"*Even beneath Agamemnon, son of Atreus, fell the heads of the Trojans as they fled, and many horses with high-arched necks rattled empty cars over the dykes of battle lacking their peerless charioteers, who were lying upon the ground dearer far to the vultures than to their wives*". (XI,158-162)

The full theory Wilkens provides sounds far-fetched on initial inspection, but his simple comparison of the East Anglian landscape to what is written in *The Illiad* is striking and convincing, yet the archaeological world will not want to change the location of Troy "officially" as it would require hundreds of history books to be rewritten.

Triumphant Achilles dragging Hector's body around Troy. (Public Domain)

I am fascinated by the similarities and 'coincidences' between the Avebury landscape and the one around Wandlebury. They both have spectacular crop circles in the surrounding fields, and are connected by the Mary energy line. Both are large circular earthworks, both have the Icknield Way nearby (called the Ridgeway in Wiltshire,) and both have a huge dyke within a few miles. In Wiltshire the 25-mile-long (40 kilometer) Wansdyke dominates the landscape south of Avebury. On the border of Wales and England is Offa's Dyke, which stretches for an incredible 176 miles (283 kilometers) coast to coast and is said to “be of the same hand as the Devil's Dyke”.

Ancient Mystery

Whoever built the Cambridgeshire dykes, whether Saxons, Boudica, the Achaeans, or the ancient megalith builders, their mystery is as profound as the megalithic sites that dominate the greater British landscape. The man-hours and sheer size of these earthworks puts the likes of Stonehenge in the dark. However, their design and style shows remarkable correspondences with

Avebury and other great earthwork monuments, and one day we may discover the true purpose of these incredible earthen scars across the mysterious and magical landscape of East Anglia.

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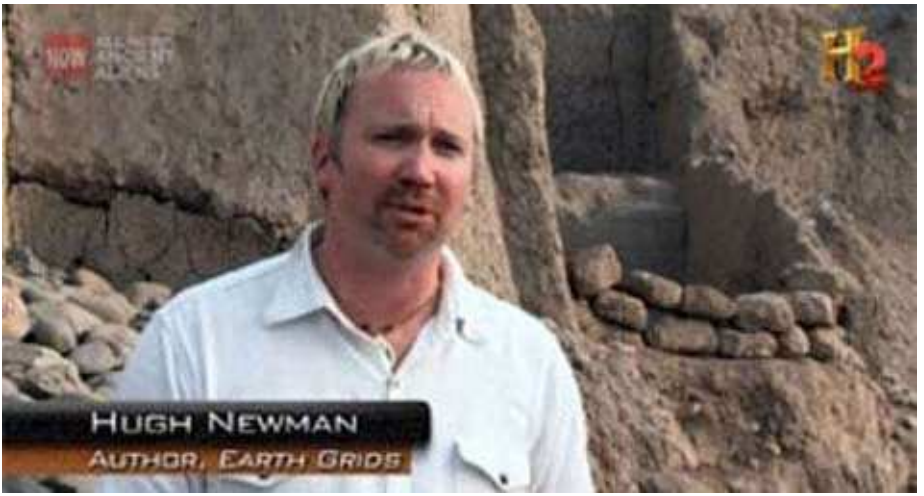


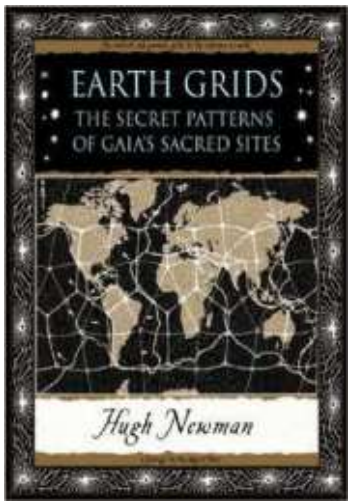
HUGH NEWMAN was brought up in Cambridge, and is an explorer, antiquarian, and author of

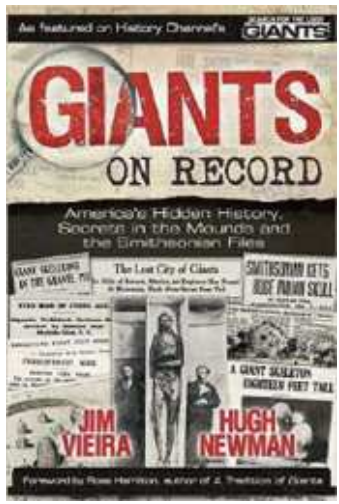
Earth Grids: The Secret Patterns of Gaia's Sacred Sites (2008),

and co-author with Jim Vieira of *Giants On Record: America's Hidden History, Secrets in the Mounds and the Smithsonian Files* (2015).

He is currently writing ***The Wandlebury Enigma*,** focussing on the sites around Cambridge. He has several articles published on Ancient Origins website and has been a regular guest on History Channel's *Ancient Aliens* and *Search for the Lost Giants*.

He organizes the *Megalithomania Conference* every May in Glastonbury, and hosts regular tours to Peru, Mexico, Egypt, Turkey, Java and other locations. He currently lives in Glastonbury, England.





His websites are
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Long Lost Golden Age - Just a Myth?

Modern Science May Have Found a Link

By Walter Cruttenden

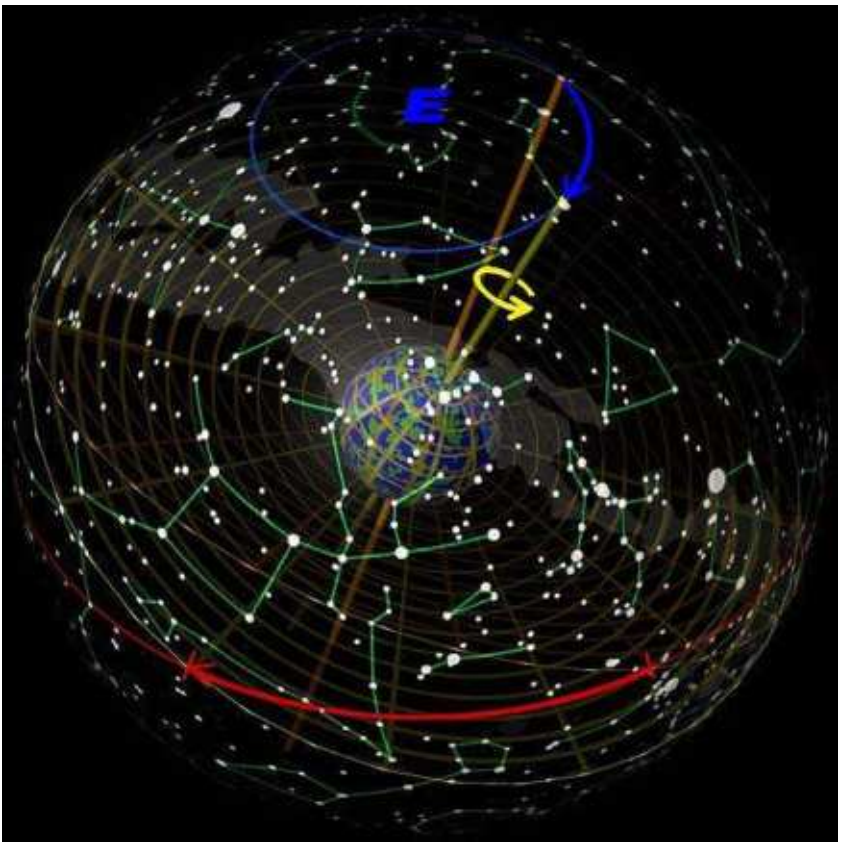
Artist's depiction of a mysterious Ninth Planet. (CC BY-SA 4.0)

The myth and folklore of ancient cultures speak of a vast cycle of time with alternating dark and golden ages; Plato called it the Great Year. Most of us were taught that this cycle was just a myth and the golden age, just a fairytale.

Giorgio de Santillana, former professor of the history of science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA, tells us this idea of a cycle went far beyond Greece and India. In their landmark work, Hamlet's Mill, de Santillana and co-author Hertha von Dechend, show that the myth and folklore of more than thirty ancient cultures mention a cycle of time with long periods of enlightenment broken by dark ages of ignorance. Moreover, they show that it seems to be connected to or driven by a known astronomical phenomenon, the precession of the equinox.

This is where modern science may now be giving us some startling new evidence.

We all know the two celestial motions that have a profound effect on life and consciousness. Earth's rotation on its axis causes humans to move from a waking state to a sleep state and back again every twenty-four hours. Our bodies have adapted to Earth's rotation so well that it produces these regular changes in consciousness without our even thinking the process remarkable.



Precession of the equinoxes as seen from 'outside' the celestial dome. (Tau'olunga)

The second Copernican motion, the earth revolving around the sun, has an equally significant effect, prompting trillions of life

forms to spring out of the ground, to bloom, fruit, and then decay, while billions of other species hibernate, spawn, or migrate en masse. Our visible world literally springs to life, completely changes its color and stride, and then reverses with every waxing and waning of the second celestial motion. Again we are so used to it we hardly think it noteworthy.

The third celestial motion, libration, or the precession of the equinox, is less understood than the first two, but if we are to believe ancient cultures, its effect is equally transformative. What disguises the impact of this motion is its timescale. Like the mayfly, which lives but one day a year and knows nothing of the seasons, the human being has an average life span that comprises only 1/360th of the roughly 24,000-year precessional cycle. And just as the mayfly born on an overcast, windless day has no idea that there is anything as splendid as sunshine or a breeze, so do we, born in an era of materialistic rationality, have little awareness of a golden age or higher states of consciousness – though that is the consistent ancestral message.

As Giorgio and Hertha point out, the idea of a great cycle linked to the slow precession of the equinox was common to numerous cultures before the Christian era, but then lost. Now an increasing body of astronomical and archaeological evidence suggests the cycle may have a basis in fact. More importantly, understanding its ebb and flow and the character of each epoch provides insight into civilization's future. So far the Ancients are right on; there does seem to be evidence of a lost high age in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Ancient India, etc. long before the Dark Ages. Then we sunk into a period where even Greece and the great Roman Empire collapsed, with famine, plague and brutal inquisition as a rule. And finally, a renaissance (rebirth) of scientific knowledge helping us to emerge from the depths of the dark ages. So what

drives these changes and what can we expect in the future? Understanding the cause of precession is key.

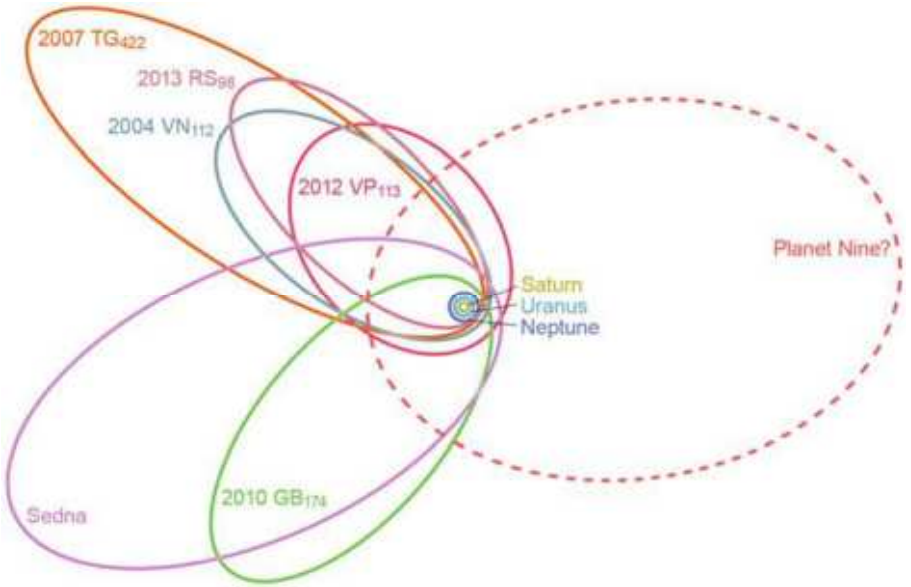
Cycles of rising and falling: The burning of Rome, and the rebirth of knowledge. (Public Domain)

Heavenly Observations

The observation of Earth's three motions is quite simple.

In the first, rotation, we see the sun rise in the east and set in the west every twenty-four hours. And if we were to look at the stars just once a day, we would see a similar pattern over a year: the stars rise in the east and set in the west. The twelve constellations of the zodiac — the ancient markers of time that lie along the ecliptic, the sun's path — pass overhead at the rate of about one per month and return to the starting point of our celestial observation at the end of the year. And if we looked just once a year, say on the autumnal equinox, we would notice the stars move retrograde (opposite to the first two motions) at the rate of about one degree every seventy years. At this pace, the equinox falls in a different constellation approximately once every 2,000 years, taking about 24,000 years to complete its cycle through the twelve constellations. This is called precession (the backward motion) of the equinox relative to the fixed stars.

The standard theory of precession says it is principally the Moon's gravity acting upon the oblate Earth that must be the cause of Earth's changing orientation to distant space. However, this theory was developed before astronomers learned the solar system could move and has now been found by the International Astronomical Union to be "inconsistent with dynamical theory." Ancient oriental astronomy teaches that an equinox slowly moving or "precessing" through the zodiac's twelve constellations is simply due to the motion of the sun curving through space around another star, which changes our viewpoint of the stars from Earth. To this date, astronomers have not yet discovered such a star so they dismiss the myth. But, just recently (January 2016), scientists at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in California, USA, have publicly stated they have found evidence of a large gravitational influence on one side of our solar system forcing the minor planets (like Pluto and Sedna) to fall into elongated, inclined patterns. Consequently, modern science is now looking for either a ninth planet or a star affecting our solar system.



Orbital correlations among six distant trans-Neptunian objects led to the hypothesis of a Ninth Planet. (CC0)

Beyond the technical considerations, a large mass would provide a logical reason why we might have a Great Year, to use Plato's term, with alternating dark and golden ages. That is, if the solar system carrying the Earth actually moves in a huge ~24,000-year orbit around another mass, subjecting Earth to the electromagnetic (EM) spectrum of another star or EM source along the way, shaping the subtle electrical and magnetic fields through which we move, we could expect this to affect our magnetosphere, ionosphere, and very likely all life in a pattern commensurate with that orbit. So, just as Earth's smaller diurnal and annual motions produce the cycles of day and night and the seasons of the year (both due to Earth's changing position relative to the EM spectrum of the Sun), so might the larger celestial motion be expected to produce a cycle that affects life and consciousness on a grand scale.

A hypothesis for how consciousness might be affected by such a celestial cycle can be built on the work of Dr. Valerie Hunt, a former professor of physiology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). In a number of studies, she has found that changes in the ambient subtle electrical, EM and magnetic fields (which surround us all the time) can dramatically affect human cognition and performance. In short, consciousness appears to be affected by subtle fields of light, that may have long term effects barely understood.

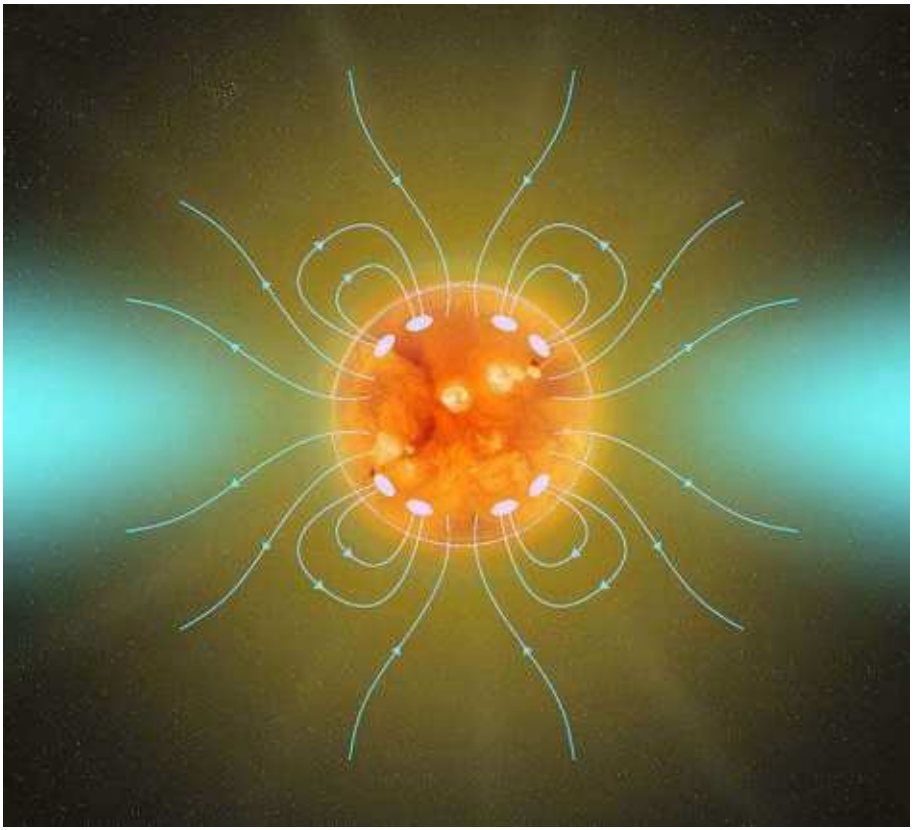


Illustration of the magnetic fields in the solar corona (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Consistent with myth and folklore, the concept behind the Great Year or cyclical model of history is based on the Sun's motion through space, subjecting Earth to waxing and waning stellar fields (all stars are huge generators of EM spectra) resulting in the legendary rise and fall of the ages over great epochs of time.

The Trundholm sun chariot (c. 1350 BC) pulled by a horse is a sculpture believed to be illustrating an important part of Nordic Bronze Age mythology. (Public Domain)

Historical Perspective

Current theories of history generally ignore myth and folklore and do not consider any macro external influences on consciousness. For the most part, modern history theory teaches that consciousness (or history) moves in a linear pattern from the primitive to the modern, with few exceptions, and it includes the ideas that people were hunter-gatherers until about 5,000 years ago, tribes first banded together for protection from other warring parties, and written communication must precede large engineered structures or populous civilizations.

The problem with this widely accepted paradigm is that it is not consistent with the evolving interpretation of recently discovered ancient cultures and anomalous artifacts.

In the last hundred years, major discoveries have been made in Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, South America, Turkey and many other regions that break the rules of history theory and push back the time of advanced human development. Specifically, they show that ancient peoples were, in many ways, far more proficient and civilized nearly five thousand years ago than they were during the more recent dark ages of just six hundred to a thousand years ago.

In Caral, an ancient complex of unknown origin on the west coast of Peru, we find six pyramids that are carbon dated to 2700 BC, a date contemporaneous with Egyptian pyramids and that rivals the time of the first major structures found in the so-called Cradle of Civilization in Mesopotamia. Caral is an ocean away from the Cradle. We find no evidence of writing or weaponry, two of the so-called necessities of civilization, but we do find beautiful musical instruments, astronomically aligned structures, and evidence of commerce with distant lands (fabrics, seeds and shells not indigenous to the area)— all signs of a prosperous culture.

Gobekli Tepe presents an even greater challenge to conventional accounts of history. Dated to at least 9000 BC, this site in Turkey contains dramatic architecture, including huge carved pillars. To find that something so large and complex existed long before the dates accepted for the invention of agriculture and pottery is an archaeological enigma. These sites defy the standard historical paradigm. And what is stranger still is that so many of these civilizations seemed to decline en masse. In ancient Mesopotamia, Pakistan, Jiroft, and adjacent lands, we find knowledge of astronomy, geometry, advanced building techniques, sophisticated plumbing and water systems, incredible art, dyes and fabrics, surgery, medicine, and many other refinements of a civilized culture which seem to have emerged from nowhere and were completely lost over the next few thousand years.

Archaeological site of Göbekli Tepe in Turkey. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

By the time of the worldwide dark ages, every one of these civilizations, including the big ones in Egypt and the Indus Valley, had largely turned to dust or nomadic ways of life. Near the depths of the cyclic downturn, there were ruins and little else, while the local populace knew nothing of the builders except through legend. In some areas where larger populations still remained, such as parts of Europe, poverty, plague, and disease were often rampant, and the ability to read, write, or duplicate any of the earlier engineering or scientific feats had essentially disappeared. What happened?

While records of this period remain spotty, the archeological evidence indicates that consciousness, reflected as human ingenuity and capability, was greatly diminished. Humanity seemed to have lost the ability to do the things it used to do.

Interestingly, this is just what many ancient cultures predicted. Stefan Maul, the world's foremost Assyrianologist, shed light on this phenomenon in his 1997 Stanford Presidential Lectures series. He tells us that the Akkadians knew they lived in a declining era. They revered the past as a higher time and tried to hang on to it, but at the same time, they predicted and lamented the dark ages that would follow. Maul's etymological studies of cuneiform tablets show the ancient words for "past" have now become our words for "future" and the ancient words for "future" have become our words for "past." It is almost as if humanity orients its motion through time depending on whether it is going toward or away from a golden age.

Akkadian inscription found at the city of Marad in Iraq, ca. 2260 BCE (CC BY-SA 2.0 FR)

This principle of waxing and waning epochs is depicted in numerous bas-reliefs found in ancient Mithraic "mystery school" temples. The famed Tauroctony, or bull-slaying scene, is usually surrounded by two boys, Cautes and Cautopetes. One holds a torch up on the ascending side of the zodiac, indicating a time of increasing light, and the other holds a torch down on the

descending side of the zodiac, indicating a time of darkness. These are further broken into ages, which the Greeks deemed, “Iron, Bronze, Silver and Gold”, a simple way to describe the epochs of the Great Year.

Tauroctony scene on a Roman bas-relief. 2nd or 3rd century. (Public Domain)

Understanding that consciousness may indeed rise and fall with the motions of the heavens gives meaning to ancient myth and folklore and puts anomalous cultures and artifacts, such as the Antikythera device and the Babylon battery, into a historical context that makes sense. For example, the battery was developed at least 2,000 years ago, lost in the dark ages, then

reinvented by Volta in the post renaissance period. The same thing goes for prosthetic devices, brain surgery, and knowledge of a heliocentric system and advanced engineering, etc. They were discovered, lost, then rediscovered. It also speaks to why so many ancient cultures appear to have been fascinated with the stars and provides us with a workable paradigm in which to understand history. It could also help us identify the forces that propelled the Renaissance and that may be accelerating consciousness in our current era. Myth and folklore, the scientific language of yore, provide a deeper look at consciousness throughout the ages.

Astronomical Race

The recent news out of Caltech is prompting astronomers and astrophysicists around the world to look for something big out there. The race is on. It just may be that they finally give us a reason for the cycle of the ages.

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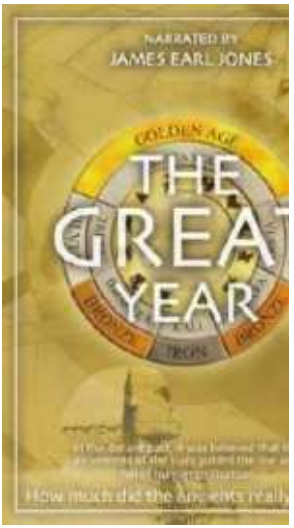
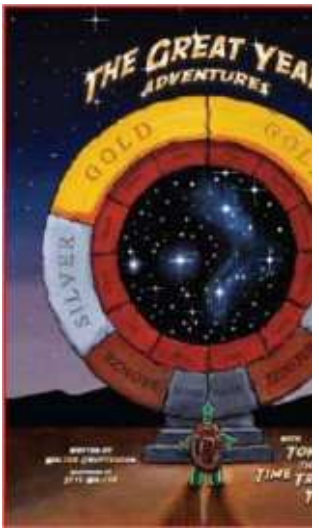
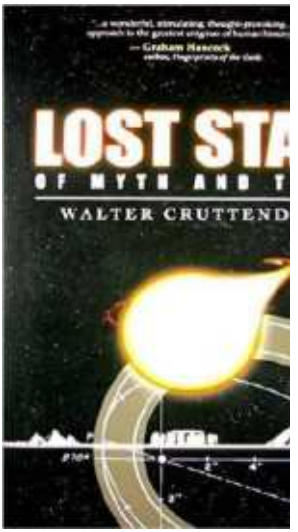
About the Author

WALTER CRUTTENDEN is the Director of the Binary Research Institute, an archaeoastronomy think tank in California, USA. He is the author of *Lost Star of Myth and Time*, *The Great Year Adventures*, and the award winning documentary, *The Great Year*, narrated by James Earl Jones.







Cruttenden's work studies the astronomy of ancient cultures, their almost universal belief in a cycle of time with alternating Dark and Golden Ages, and what this means for humanity today.

For more information, see **BinaryResearchInstitute.org** or **CycleoftheAges.org**

In Search of King Alcinous: Who were the Legendary Phaeacians?

By Petros Koutoupis

The mythological Alcinous and his kingdom have remained one of the most mysterious and elusive topics of ancient Greek literature. Not much is known of this foreign monarch, or at least not much has survived the test of time. Details of the ruler and his kingdom survive only in the journeys of both Odysseus and Jason, but do those details reflect a now perverted form of reality? Was there an Alcinous prototype ruling over a foreign nation of master seafarers? How much evidence can the ancient narratives provide, and how much of it can be corroborated by archaeology and geography?

Literary Evidence

Odysseus at the court of Alcinous (Public Domain)

In every source, it is said Alcinous was not a native to Greece but instead a ruler of the peoples known as the Phaeacians, living in the outskirts of what then was the known world. He was a wise and just leader; favored by both gods and man. We are first introduced to him in the eighth century BCE epic, the *Odyssey*.

It is written that under the direction of the Olympians, and after twenty years away from Ithaca, his native land, Odysseus was freed by Calypso (daughter of Atlas the Titan) from her island, and he eventually washed ashore on the island of Scheria. Remember, ten years was taken from Odysseus for the Trojan War while the remaining ten were for his voyage back from the war. Alcinous was the happy ruler of Scheria with his wife, Arete, his five sons and one daughter, Nausicaa.

> *...but Athene went to the land and city of the Phaeacians. These dwelt of old in spacious Hypereia near the Cyclopes, men overweening in pride who plundered them continually and were mightier than they. From there Nausithous, the godlike, had removed them, and led and settled them in Scheria far from the bread-eating mankind.*
>
> *...Alcinous was now king, made wise in counsel by the gods.*
>
> *Homer, Odyssey, vi. 2-12*

In legend, naked Odysseus surprises Alcinous' daughter Nausicaa and her maids. (Public Domain)

Homer spent little time in describing the island itself and instead focused on the palace of Alcinous and the way in which he received and entertained Odysseus. While Alcinous treated his guest to the finest Scheria has to offer, Odysseus shared his woeful and often challenging tale with his Phaeacian audience.

The only clues we are given of the Phaeacians and their island is that it was a mountainous island and they were masters of the sea. With a description like 'mountainous', it is no wonder that the location of Scheria continues to elude all in search of it.

We also find Alcinous and the Phaeacians in the *Argonautica*. Written by the third century BCE author and poet Apollonius Rhodius, we read:

There is a fertile, expansive island at the entrance of the Ionian strait in the Ceraunian sea, under which is said to lie the sickle…

of the Phaeacians has been called by the name Drepane…

the Argo came, aided by the winds, from the Thrinacian sea…

Alcinous and his people gladly welcomed the travelers...

Apollonius Rhodius, Argonautica, iv. 982-997.

The Ceraunian Sea is located just North of the Ionian straight, opening up to the island of Kerkyra (or Corfu). Based on the description provided by Apollonius, Drepane would be associated with Kerkyra.

On the seventh day they left Drepane…

Already they had left behind the gulf named for the Ambracians, already with sails spread wide they had passed the land of the Curetes and the line of narrow islands along with the Echinades themselves.

Apollonius Rhodius, Argonautica, iv. 1223-1230.

His identification of Kerkyra is further confirmed by the voyage following Jason's departure of the island.

Map showing the route taken by the Argo as detailed in the Argonautica. (CC BY-SA 4.0)

The Ambracian Gulf was situated along the Ionian Sea. It is South of Kerkyra and North of the island of Lefkada, and on the Greek mainland. The Curetes were a legendary peoples living along and on the islands of Acarnania. Also, situated along the western coast of the Greek mainland in the Ionian Sea.

> *After skirting the island of Thrinacia, which held the cattle of the Sun, they came to the island of the Phaeacians, Corcyra, which was ruled by Alcinous.*
>
> *Apollodorus, Library, i. 9*

Additional clues may come from the etymology of the word Phaeacian. It is generally accepted that name derives from the Greek *phaios* or "gray." While the color may somehow describe the Phaeacian culture, we are still left speculating its true symbolic purpose. Was it their skin color, eye color, the landscape of their island, or something entirely different?

Odysseus departs from the Land of the Pheacians. (Public Domain)

Historical Evidence

A satellite image of the Ionian Sea.

The earliest reference to Kerkyra dates back to the 13th century BCE. The Mycenaean Linear B inscription refers to a *ko-ro-ku-ra-i-jo* or "man from Kerkyra." It is difficult to say who inhabited the island during the Late Bronze and very Early Iron ages of the Eastern Mediterranean but we do know that by the eighth century BCE, Corinthians and Eretrians (from Euboea) had migrated to the region and settled it.

In every narrative, the land of the Phaeacians was reached after passing the island of Thrinacia in the West. What was Thrinacia? Scholars have long debated this but most tend to agree with ancient sources in identifying it as the island of Sicily. We first read of Thrinacia in Book XII of the *Odyssey*. It is an island home to the cattle of Helios, the Greek god of the sun. It is strongly believed that part of the name, *Thri*, resembles the Greek word of *tria* or three and alludes to the three corners of the island.

The interesting part of all of this is there actually exists a Drepani today. More appropriately called Trapani, it rests on the western coast of the island of Sicily. Its name would have likely been a common one, translating to "sickle", and based on the curved shape of the city's harbor. (Refer to the first excerpt of Apollonius Rhodius highlighted above). The site was originally founded by the Elymians during the Classical Period, that is, from the 5th to 4th centuries BCE.

Photo of modern-day Trapani with its curved, sickle-shaped harbor. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Does History Reveal Answers?

Homer's epic recalls an age long forgotten, and one that predates the Greeks of his time. It was a time of heroes and epic adventures. It was also a time hosting both miraculous and fearful mythological gods and creatures. Modern scholars place this timeframe in and around the end of the Late Bronze Age, circa 1200 BCE. What followed this era was a brief Dark Age; literacy disappeared and legends were born. With this in mind, can we, without a shred of doubt, place the Phaeacians on the Greek island of Kerkyra? Unfortunately, the answer is a firm no. At least, not until additional archaeological or literary evidence proves otherwise.

We have yet to understand the role of Kerkyra in the world of the Mycenaean Greeks. Were they non-Greek-speaking outsiders?

Were they experts of the sea? Despite what has been maintained through Classical tradition, this conclusion does raise its fair share of doubts. For instance, Kerkyra is to the North of Ithaca in the same Ionian Sea. When Alcinous received Odysseus into his palace, they admit to not knowing Odysseus the man, but instead knew of Odysseus the hero of the Trojan War, as evidenced by the bardic tales of Demodocus.

How could two influential kings (i.e. Alcinous and Odysseus) share dominion in the same sea and not personally know the other?

Did the Phaeacians exist beyond Greece and further west closer to the Italian mainland? Does the Sicilian Trapani in any way relate to the Drepani of the Phaeacians? Probably not. As I highlighted earlier, the name itself would have been representative of the landscape. It also does not help when the Phaeacians are placed on Drepani, as opposed to Scheria, many centuries after Homer.

Have we been completely misled by Homer? I am under the belief that the Phaeacians of Homer's tale represent the descendants of a now lost Minoan population. By the 15th century BCE, the Mycenaean Greeks had expanded their sphere of influence into that which was originally under Minoan control and over time, the Minoans either assimilated into the Mycenaean stock or completely lost their original identities. Now if we revisit Homer's telling of these foreign peoples, we may start to notice a much older story buried within verse.

I am reminded of an island in the middle of the Aegean and attached to the Cyclades (a chain of islands). I speak of Thera (or Santorini). In approximately 1628 BCE, the volcano situated in the center of the island erupted and buried the nearby Minoan town of Akrotiri under pumice and ash. Discovered by the Greek archaeologist Spyridon Marinatos in 1967 CE, archaeologists

continue to excavate the site today. It is interesting to note that all excavations have yet to reveal the bodies of the victims which have led many, including myself, to speculate that a mass exodus of Minoans sought refuge elsewhere before the climax of the natural disaster.

Elaborate and colorful fresco revealed at Akrotiri. (Public Domain)

If you recall, Homer provided us with a backstory to the Phaeacians: they escaped the man eating Cyclopes to eventually find their new home in Scheria. What of the Cyclopes? From the hymns of Callimachus to the plays of Euripides, historical records as early as the late fourth century BCE have linked the Cyclopes with volcanoes. The name Cyclops (singular form) translates to "round-eyed" or "circle-eyed." Could this be a representation of the opening of a volcano. Was the volcano on Thera the Cyclopes the Phaeacians escaped from? Could the “gray” in their name represent the volcanic ash?

Remarkably preserved artifacts are revealed from the ruins of ancient Akrotiri, Greece. (BigStockPhoto)

Even if we can associate the Phaeacians with the descendants of Minoans, we are still left with the same question: where is Scheria? Unfortunately, archaeology has yielded very little in identifying such a migration.

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About the Author

By profession, **PETROS KOUTOUPIS** is a software developer and an entrepreneur. When not overwhelmed with being a good husband and an excellent father (of two), and during the little free time he may have, Petros enjoys immersing himself with topics of ancient history and theology. He is fluent in the language of Greek, and has been a self-taught student of Septuagintal Greek and Biblical Hebrew; with additional knowledge in Aramaic, Ugaritic, and Akkadian grammar. His recent work focuses predominantly on the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages of Eastern Mediterranean, leading to a quest to unravel the mysteries of our history.

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The Strange Death and Afterlife of King Edmund: Did a martyred saint rise from the grave to kill a Viking king?

By Charles Christian

Martrydom of St Edmund. (Brian Whelan/CC BY-SA 3.0)

Over the past decade, there have been two major public campaigns in the UK to drum up support for removing St George as the patron saint of England and replacing him with St Edmund, the man who was the country's original heavenly patron for over four hundred years from the early 10th century. Both campaigns failed but they did serve to reignite interest in St Edmund. So who was he and what was his story?

The setting was the Saxon kingdom of the East Angles, which occupied modern-day Norfolk, Suffolk and part of the Lincolnshire

Fens, in the year AD 869. On the throne was King Edmund, a young and devout Christian monarch who was only 14 years old at the time he was crowned, on Christmas Day 855.

For the previous 60 years, Viking raiders from Scandinavia had been carrying out ever more bloody hit-and-run attacks on England, but in 865, thousands of Danish and Norwegian Vikings – described in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as the Great Heathen Army – landed in their longships along the coast of Suffolk and launched an all-out invasion. History says the king's courtiers and ealdormen (nobles) supplied the Vikings with horses, both as a bribe to deter them from looting and pillaging the local area, and also as hint and an encouragement that they should move out from East Anglia and raid other parts of the country.

Such apparently treacherous disloyalty in the face of a common foes might seem shocking by modern standards, but there was no love lost between the England's four rival Saxon kingdoms. This was particularly so in East Anglia where, over the previous two centuries, several of its kings were deposed, executed or killed in battle by rulers of the other kingdoms.

Nevertheless, the bribery stratagem seems to have worked, and for the next few years the Vikings fought their way up and down England, destroying the old dynasties and eventually creating their own separate province, known as The Danelaw, across the North and East of the country. Among the Saxon rulers overthrown was King Ella of Northumbria, who a decade earlier had executed a Viking leader by throwing him into a pit of poisonous snakes.

The Vikings of the Great Heathen Army, who had a long memory for grievances (as King Edmund would learn to his cost), took their revenge on Ella by subjecting him to the ritual of "the Blood Eagle"

– a prolonged torture leading to death, involving disemboweling and evisceration.

Five years later, after ravaging the rest of the country, the Vikings were back in East Anglia, attacking the kingdom's town and slaughtering its population. Proffered bribes did not work, there was to be no peace treaty this time. In November King Edmund's army met the Vikings in battle near the town of Thetford. So what had changed?

A section from the Stora Hammars I stone from Gotland, Sweden. The illustration depicts a blood eagle execution. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

The Fate of Ragnar Lodbrok

Among the leaders of the Great Heathen Army were two warriors called Ivar the Boneless (also known as Hyngwar) and Ubba. They were two of the many sons of a legendary chieftain (according to the Viking sagas, he once killed a dragon) called Ragnar Lodbrok (literally Ragnar Hairy-Breeches) and they had come looking for vengeance.

Some years previously Ragnar had been sailing in a small boat, possibly on a wildfowling trip along the western coast of Denmark, when a storm had suddenly blown up and swept him far, far away from the coast and across the North Sea. Eventually he washed up

on the coast of East Anglia, where he was rescued and taken to Reedham, which is where King Edmund's royal court was based at that time.

Physicians nursed Ragnar back to health and in due course King Edmund and his mysterious foreign guest struck up a friendship, as both men loved hunting. Ragnar was soon regularly accompanying Edmund on hunting trips, much to the ire of king's chief huntsman Bern, who became increasingly jealous of the favor the Viking was being shown.

Tragedy struck as one day, when the king was travelling elsewhere in his kingdom, Bern challenged Ragnar to a secret competition to test their respective hunting skills. Two men left Reedham that morning but only one returned. Naturally the king and his courtiers wondered what had happened to Ragnar but Bern merely shrugged his shoulders and said he hadn't seen him all day.

Ragnar's fate might have remained a mystery had not his hound Garm, which had accompanied the Viking on the voyage across the North Sea but had been left behind the morning of that secret hunting trip, begun acting aggressively towards Bern, snarling and snapping whenever he caught sight of him. Eventually Garm escaped and led some of King Edmund's men to a shallow grave in small, lonely wood a few miles from Reepham. In the grave they found the body of Ragnar, with wounds revealing that he had been stabbed to death.

It was murder – and there was also evidence pointing to the culprit, for still gripped in Ragnar's cold, dead fingers was a scrap of fabric he'd torn from the clothing of his assailant in a final death struggle. The fabric was identified as part of the tunic of a royal huntsman and, when Bern's chamber was searched, the king's men found a tunic containing a matching rip in its sleeve.

Bern was pronounced guilty by King Edmund and ordered that his punishment was to be cast adrift on an ebbing tide in the very same boat that had carried Ragnar to England. It was at this point Fate took an ironic turn, for Bern did not perish in the boat but was instead swept back across the North Sea, washing up on the very same Danish shore where Ragnar had gone missing several months previously.

Recognizing the boat as having belonged to their father, Ivar and Ubba were keen to learn from Bern what had happened to their Ragnar. Bern's treacherous explanation was that King Edmund had ordered their father be killed and his body abandoned in a wood to deny it a proper burial.

The Martyrdom of a King

Now back to November 869 (some chronicles suggest it was the year 870) and in the words of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the Great Heathen Army "rode across Mercia into East Anglia, and took winter-quarters at Thetford; and that winter King Edmund fought against them, and the Danish took the victory and conquered all that land."

In the aftermath of the defeat, Edmund and some of his retainers fled east but became separated about 20 miles (32 kilometers) away, near a settlement called Haegelisdun, where Edmund was captured by the Vikings who caught him hiding beneath a bridge. Legend has it Edmund was captured after a wedding party, making their way across the bridge that evening, saw the glint of the moonlight reflecting off his golden spurs and betrayed him to the Vikings. As he was dragged away, Edmund placed a curse on all bridal couples who should ever cross the fateful bridge.

Edmund's capture at the bridge.

Once in the hands of Ivar, Ubba and their henchmen, Edmund was roped to an oak tree, then beaten and whipped in an attempt to torture him into renouncing his Christian faith and accepting Ivar as his king. When Edmund refused to submit, saying he was ready to die for his people and his God, the Vikings responded by shooting arrows and throwing spears at him "as if it was a game, until he was entirely covered with their missiles, like the bristles of a hedgehog."

A medieval illumination depicting the death of Edmund the Martyr on 20 November 869 by the Vikings. (Public Domain)

But still Edmund didn't die and still he continued to pray to God, so the Vikings cut his head off. Mindful of Bern's tale of Ragnar's fate, the Vikings threw Edmund's body into a communal rubbish pit, to deny it a proper Christian burial, and then played football with his head until the grew bored and tossed it away into a thicket of thorns and brier.

Edmund's death occurred on the 20 November (still observed as St Edmund's Day) and a few days later, when the Vikings had moved on, some of Edmund's followers returned to the area. They

recovered his body but at first couldn't locate his head. However, as they searched, calling out "Where are you friend?" they heard the king's voice calling back "Here, here, here." They followed the source of the sound to where they found the king's head, protected from scavengers and carrion by a giant grey wolf that cradled it between its paws. The wolf immediately yielded up the head, then followed Edmund's men as they took the body back to a nearby village. Once it was certain the king had received a proper burial, the wolf returned to the forest and was never seen again.

Detail of a miniature of Edmund's head calling out "Here! Here! Here!" all day long until the men searching for it found it hidden in a thicket, being guarded by a wolf. (Public Domain)

There are a number of places that claim to be the location of Haegelisdun but the village Hoxne in Suffolk's Waveney Valley is the one with the longest and firmest association, including the site of Edmund's oak, which stood in a field just outside the village until it fell in a storm in 1848. Reports at the time describe the oak as being "ancient with a trunk over 20 feet in circumference" within which were found old, iron arrow heads.

Commemoration marking the site of Edmund's Oak.

The village even has a Goldbrook Bridge, said to be the site of Edmund's capture and which, until as recently as the 19th century, wedding parties would take a detour to avoid for fear of invoking the curse.

Goldbrook Bridge, Hoxne Village.

Inscription at Goldbrook Bridge.

As for the wolf, in 1890 a vicar found an old, stone chest in the crypt of a church near Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk. Inside was a collection of bones later identified as belonging to a large wolf. It

is also interesting to note that King Edmund was the last member of a Saxon royal dynasty called the Wuffingas, who had ruled East Anglia since the sixth century. The family name is derived from "the Kin of the Wolf" – so perhaps Edmund's wolf knew it was guarding the last of the line?

Edmund's Adventures in the Afterlife

But, our story does not stop with Edmund's death and his burial within a small and hastily built wooden chapel near Hoxne. Within 25 years of his death, miracles were already being ascribed to the late king's intervention and even the Vikings, who now ruled the area, were minting commemorative coins carrying the inscription St Edmund the King.

A few years later, as the late king's cult grew, his remains were transferred to the city of Beadoriceworth, soon renamed St Edmund's Bury (modern day Bury St Edmunds) and the abbey built to house his shrine became a popular site of pilgrimage.

The reputation of Edmund, the king and now a saintly martyr, had received a further boost after the original grave was opened. It was said that not only was Edmund's body found to be incorrupt (viz there was no decomposition) but all the wounds on his body had healed, his head was once more joined to his body, and all that was left to show where it had been severed was a thin red crease on the neck. (The last reported opening of Edmund's tomb was in 1198, when the body was found to still be incorrupt. One account says a skeptical monk actually tugged the king's hair to see if the head really was reattached to the body and was promptly slapped by the saint for his lack of faith.)

The next twist in the story comes in AD 1013 during the chaotic reign of King Ethelred, forever known in English history as Ethelred

the Unready. The Saxons and Vikings were still at war and, after Ethelred had been forced into exile, Sweyn Forkbeard, the King of Denmark and Norway was also declared King of England on Christmas Day, AD 1013.

Sweyn Forkbeard, king of Denmark, England, and parts of Norway. (Public Domain)

Five weeks later King Sweyn was dead. The official explanation was he died in his bed from injuries sustained after a fall from his horse. However, another version of the story says “divine vengeance put a stop to his blasphemy.”

The background was Sweyn and his Vikings were not only seizing as much Danegeld (what we’d nowadays call protection money) from his new English subjects but had also threatened to burn down the city of Bury St Edmunds and its abbey, as well as slaughter all its inhabitants, unless they paid over an additional sum of ransom money.

It was then divine intervention seemingly struck when, in the early hours of 3 February 1014, the ghost of St Edmund, mounted on a white charger, was said to have appeared in Sweyn's bedchamber and fatally ran him through with a spear! According to the legend, although he was surrounded by his Vikings, he alone saw St Edmund coming towards him. Terrified, he began shouting "Help, fellow-warriors, help! St Edmund is coming to kill me!" But the Vikings could not see the ghost which "ran him through fiercely with a spear," leaving Sweyn "tormented with great pain until twilight, he ended his life with a wretched death."

The death of Sweyn Forkbeard at the end of a ghost's spear. (Public Domain)

You may scoff at this story but six years later in 1020, when Sweyn's son Cnut (or Canute) was king of England, the new monarch visited the shrine of St Edmund and bestowed on it sufficient money to replace the old wooden abbey and fund the building in stone of a grand new Benedictine monastery. Perhaps Cnut was fearful of a similar haunting unless he atoned for the sins of his Viking ancestors?

(Sweyn, incidentally, was never actually crowned king of England and his reign was the second shortest of any English monarch. Lady Jane Grey, the "nine-day queen," holds the record for the shortest rule.)

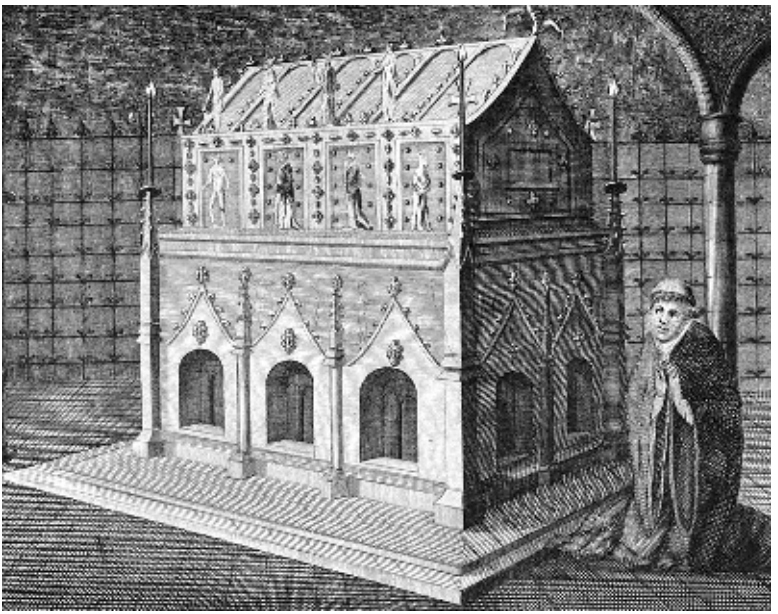
Edmund's Traveling Body

Our story is however not yet over, for in the year 1217, during one of the many barons' revolts and rebellions that plagued England in the Middle Ages, a group of French knights are said to have stolen Saint Edmund's body (or at least part of it) and whisked it away to the Basilica of Saint-Sernin in the French city of Toulouse. The relics and the saint's intercessions are credited with saving the city from the plague in the 17th century

The next development came in 1901, when the Archbishop of Westminster received some of St Edmund's relics from Saint-Sernin that were intended for the high altar of the new Roman Catholic cathedral, then under construction at Westminster in London. On their arrival in England, the relics were housed in the Fitzalan Chapel at the Duke of Norfolk's castle at Arundel. However, plans were stalled when the antiquarian Dr. Montague Rhodes James (better known as the ghost and supernatural horror

story writer M.R. James) subsequently expressed concern about the relics' validity. At the time of writing, 115 years later, those plans are still stalled and St Edmund's relics remain to this day at Arundel.

Or do they? For another version of the story says the monks at Bury St Edmunds moved the saint's still incorrupt body to prevent the French from stealing it, so whatever relics they made off with, they did not belong to Edmund.



A depiction of Edmund's shrine. (Public Domain)

Edmund's shrine was destroyed in 1539, during King Henry VIII's Reformation, and in November of that year the abbey was dissolved and the monks expelled, taking with them the secret of the location of the saint's final resting place. Historians now think the body of St Edmund is still buried in the former monks' graveyard at Bury St Edmunds, which now lies beneath the tennis courts in the town's Abbey Gardens.

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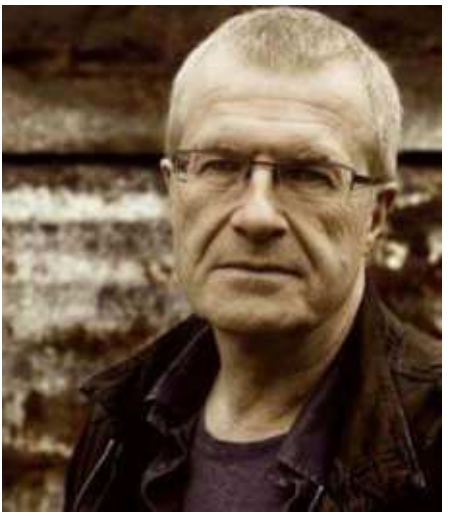
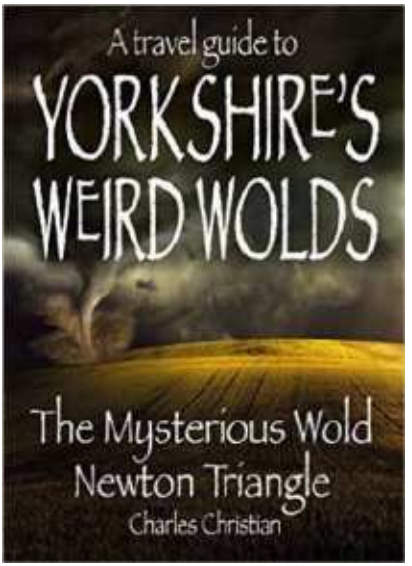
About the Author



CHARLES CHRISTIAN is a writer, editor, blogger, award-winning tech journalist, former barrister, and Reuters correspondent. He writes about media, technology, geek stuff, the just plain weird, and anything else that intrigues him. His most recent non-fiction book is *A travel guide to Yorkshire's Weird Wolds: The Mysterious Wold Newton Triangle*. He was recently described as an "outstanding writer who perfectly captures the hidden worlds and forgotten corners of Britain".

A Travel Guide to Yorkshire's Weird Wolds: The Mysterious Wold Newton Triangle



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